

THE
MYSTIC COTTAGER
OF
CHAMOUNY:
A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

As in the hollow breast of Appenine,
Beneath the shelter of encircling hills,
A myrtle rises far from human eye,
And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild;
So flourish'd blooming and unseen by all
The lovely Rosalie.

THOMSON'S SEASONS.

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M DCC XCIV.

THE
MYSTIC COTTAGER
OF
CHAMOUNY.

CHAP. XVI.

ROSALIE obeyed the summon of her plumaged monitor, and descended to the parlour just in time to see Montague set off home. For two hours she amused herself in the grounds, and strolling to the end of a high terrace that bounded the Abbey,

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she

she ascended a flight of steps that led to part of a rugged cliff, from whence on the pebbly shore she could discover the hovels of several fishermen, and their ruddy children dancing and amusing themselves on the sands, while their cheerful voices chatting and laughing broke upon the silent breeze and wafted every syllable to her ear.

A beautiful serene ocean was bounded by a fertilized country on one side, and a noble shore guarded by impending cliffs on the other. Here she amused herself half an hour and then returned, resolving to spend every leisure hour in this romantic and beautiful spot, as a favorite retreat from the glooms of the Abbey, when Lady Mentoria would indulge her with a stroll.

On entering the parlour Mrs. Hervey made her appearance, begging to know if she chose to breakfast, as her Lady always took her chocolate in her own room, which she never quitted 'till twelve, therefore
desired

desired her young visitor would amuse herself as she pleased.

Rosalie no sooner finished her dejuné but she went to the library, where she entertained herself for near three hours, 'till Lady Mentoria came in search of her.

"How is my sweet young friend?" asked she, peeping in with her parasole and cloak, "Will she take a walk?"

"Gladly, Madam," answered Rosalie, "I shall be happy to accompany you."

"I am going," returned the Dowager, "to visit my pensioners; I have three poor honest fishers, whose families I support, and by employing them in procuring fish for my family, and others in the vicinity, I amuse and keep them from the lethargy of indolence, and never admitting a superiority of preference, if one more envious quarrels with the other, I rectify their mistakes, and my

decision is their law: Thus I preserve perfect tranquillity, and I never see a cloud of sorrow or discontent shade their brows; ever blithe and industrious, they may truly be stiled happy cottagers—But you shall judge.

Proceeding to the cliff where Rosalie had taken her morning seat, she discovered a winding path guarded by small green rails, which Lady Mentoria had ordered to be cut through the cliff, in easy descent expressly for the facility of her visits, to save at least two miles going round; a bench at the bottom rested her to gain respiration, and Rosalie carried a basket of currants for the children.

“It will please the little creatures,” said Lady Mentoria, “and it will be a wholesome treat for them: These, my dear young friend, are the attentions I wish you to fulfil, when indisposition or engagement prevents my attendance.”

“A

“A pleasing employment, my dear Madam, I shall willingly perform to the best of my abilities,” replied Rosalie.

Three neat looking women and seven chubby children now welcomed their noble benefactress: One produced her spinning, another her knitting, and the third constantly made and repaired the fishing nets; while their husbands at various hours when they were on shore, were each furnished with a loom, and wove dowlafs for their own wear and the neighbouring villagers, to whom her Ladyship permitted them to sell any requisite quantity, by way of perquisite and encouragement of their industry.

The boat soon after arrived, and the fisher's leaping on shore presented some beautiful prawns which were received with a benignant smile of satisfaction, and after making a few inquiries, and distributing the fruit amongst the children, (whose sparkling eyes beamed expectation on the basket's store)

enjoined them to be good and dutiful, and slipping a shilling into each of their hands, told them it was the gift of the young lady they saw with her, to whom they must be respectfully obedient as to herself.

Slowly they re-ascended the cliff often pausing to enjoy the healthy breezes of the ocean, and contemplate the restless wave dashing its starry foam along the pebbly shore, while at a distance the inflated white sails of a passing vessel burnished by the meridian sun, glided on the bosom of the parted wave, and dazzled with its brightness the attentive eye that watched its lessening sight—Rosalie was charmed.

“As you love to contemplate the beauties of nature and innocence,” said Lady Mentoria, “I shall now lead you to an inland scene; I have seven cottages in the village which contain inhabitants of every description, among them are the youthful and the aged; in one dwells a young industrious couple just married

married, in a second an aged pair, in a third a desolated elderly widow, who instructs and protects two little orphans, in a fourth a couple in the autumn of life, surrounded by four charming children, whose notability furnishes and assists their tender parents; in the fifth lives a venerable old warrior, and two sons, sprightly, clever lads, now his only glory, though the field of honor has invested him with many badges of valour, and though deprived of one leg, his crutches are in his opinion trophies he has never regretted to exchange; my sixth cottage contains a poor blind man and one daughter, innocent, mild, and beautiful as the morn, the most dutiful affectionate girl the fondest parent could delight in; while in my seventh and last rural habitation lives a distressed curate, with a lame wife and three children, to him I have allotted the constant and regular observance of morning and evening prayers, in every family, and to instruct them in reading and writing, of which he is very capable, though the hand of oppression and misfortune has

formerly crushed the talents, that if suffered to expand, had reverted honor to himself and manifested improvement in others; thus his time is pretty well employed, and there is not a child in the village who does not delight to receive the mild and pleasing instructions of Evelyn."

Passing through a romantic picturesque lane, the rural irregular village presented itself—Evelyn, whose cottage was first, sat reading at his door, and closed his book to welcome the visitors; Catherine Evelyn was preparing the dinner; a fine baby lay in the cradle, rocked by a little girl about five years of age, while a healthy boy about two years older was shelling some beans.

"Patty's sampler is almost finished, my Lady," said the good Catherine, leaving the kneading of her dumplings, and presenting a small piece of canvas very prettily marked.

"Industrious

"Industrious little maid," said her Ladyship, giving the rosy Patty six-pence, which was consigned to the security of her mother's screw-box, and the visitors unwilling to protract the dinner took their leave.

The widow next presented her little charges, whom she was learning to knit, and after commending and rewarding their industry, they passed on to a third.

"This is Philip Stanley's cottage," said Lady Mentoria, "and the faithful Ellen, his new-made bride I see is busy at work, let us step in."

Ellen rose with a basket of stockings she was repairing, and Lady Mentoria complimenting her jocularly on her improving looks, enquired for Philip, who was gone to cut turf and faggots, proceeded to the next, where they found Lennox, the old warrior, mending one of his crutches, and whistling, 'God save the King.'

B 5

"Here

"Here is a news-paper for you," said Lady Mentoria, "which I know is a great treat to you, but do not suffer the feelings of sensibility to agitate you too far, remember you have been poorly, yet I don't forbid you to drop a tear of humanity for the woes of a fellow soldier, as you read the sad devastating fate of war."

Lennox bowed and consigned it to his pocket, while his eloquent eye and shaking head seemed to say he could enlarge on that subject if permitted.

"Keep it to yourself," said her Ladyship, "and when you have perused it give it to Evelyn."

The neighbouring cottage sheltered an aged pair, the poor old man crept feebly out to the door, with his spectacles in one hand and a letter in the other: "Your Ladyship will excuse the derangement of our cottage," said he, wiping a tear on his sleeve, "for we have

have just received a letter from our dear boy Ben, who has been eight years in the East Indies, come next Christmas, and the good fellow sends us the joyful news, he shall be down here in less than a fortnight, and has brought home something to make our lives comfortable out of his earnings: Powers of mercy, we have been out of our wits with joy these three hours, and not a jot of work done for thinking on it, for we thought he might be dead, and never had a notion of seeing him in this world again."

"Well," said Lady Mentoria, "don't flurry yourself, I will provide a bed for him in your back room, let me know when he comes, send him to the Abbey, his dutiful attention pleases me."

The old man bowed and Lady Mentoria continued her walk.

At the door of another habitation sat two fine young girls spinning, while a youth was

busily employed in pruning some plants in a little garden he had cultivated and brought to tolerable perfection; and a younger one was conning his lesson for the next day. Lady Mentoria inquired a few particulars and passed on to the next.

“You must know,” said she, “this cot contains my favorite pensioner, ’tis poor blind Orford, and the sweet Maria his only child, we shall find them busy, no doubt.”

Rosalie tapped at the door, which was opened by the charming cottager, with her knitting and book in her hand; on one side a small table sat the venerable Orford, who hearing the voice of Lady Mentoria laid down his work and bowed his head.

“Always full of employment!” said her Ladyship, taking up some platted straw his ingenuity had wove together, and formed into small mats and baskets.

“’Tis

"'Tis merely amusement," said Orford, "but last night I finished a large basket as a present for your Ladyship, 'twill hold grapes or peaches, if you will honor me by accepting it from a poor blind man; Maria arranged the coloured straw, and she tells me I have not made one mistake; and our neighbours say 'tis very pretty."

Maria instantly brought it, and Rosalie and Lady Mentoria wiped a tear as they admired and inspected it.

"Make me two or three more, Orford, and I will give you half a crown a piece for your trouble."

"Oh! heavens bless my good lady, the honor of making them will be quite sufficient, do I not constantly live on your bounty, and while I enjoy that blessing God forbid I should be covetous; permit me then to make them only as a small but grateful return for the abundant favors you have heaped
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ed on me, and my heart in consequence will feel lighter, by the idea of retaliating in some trifling measure, the gratitude I owe you."

"Excellent man!" said Lady Mentoria, "please yourself and finish them at your leisure: Maria's jacket wears fast and I mean to give her a new one."

A flush of joy passed Maria's cheek, and she poured her thanks. Lady Mentoria soon after returned through the village with every one's blessing wafted around her.

"What heartfelt satisfaction do these visits afford me," said she, "and my attention is doubly repaid by the gratitude and honor of my pensioners; these, my dear girl, are the real and only useful plans of relief to the indigent; it institutes decorum, creates the emulation of virtue, and minutely distinguishes the weed from the flower, for rear it even in the most prolific soil 'twill never lose its baneful qualities, and however its external appearance

appearance may deceive, the lurking poison will still contaminate it; but here, thank heaven, every blossom puts forth its leaf in friendly promise, and every transplanted branch flourishes fair and satisfactorily: — There is an exquisite pleasure, my charming friend, in contemplating such improving and improvable scenes, which few (I am sorry to say) whom ability enables, have either the courage or inclination to view in its proper light; pity the frailties of the debased part of mankind should deter the generous and humane from instituting a little select circle of the deserving, under the patronage of good advice and virtuous example.”

“Exalted woman,” thought Rosalie, “may the blessing of approving providence crown thee with her choicest gifts, for who so deserving?”

Delighting in visiting these virtuous pensioners, she often strolled thither, to pass an hour in the cottage of Evelyn, whose
excellent

excellent plan of imparting education among his little flock gave her the highest opinion of his principles, for benign diffidence and virtuous example formed the constant method of his encouraging and progressive system for inculcating religion and morality in their most pleasing emulative forms, and ever prone to admire merit and reward its progress, she consecrated the following lines to his character, and laid them one morning on Lady Mentoria's breakfast table, as the produce of an hour's reflection when seated on her favorite cliff.

THE VILLAGE MONITOR.

Merit's a plant so delicate in bloom,
So scarce its growth and arduous to explore,
Oft' crush'd in embryo, and neglect its doom,
That promis'd buds oft' droop to rise no more.

But virtue found it with'ring on the wild,
Pity'd its fate, transplanted it with care,

In richer soil, and temp'rature more mild,
Safe from the desolate and blighting air.

Cherish'd with fost'ring hand, prolific flow'rs,
Gratefully peeping 'neath the with'ring leaf,
Diffused their fragrance in sequester'd bow'rs,
No more weigh'd down with gems of dewy grief.

Tranquil expanding in the pros'prous ray,
No tempest ruffling their envied bloom,
Serene the ev'ning of autumnal day,
With gentle breeze shall waft it to the tomb.

'Till spring re-dawning on the mould'ring grave,
Shall renovate its verdure once again,
And pity, with the drop of mercy, lave,
Its future blossom on th' etherial plain.

In allegory thus permit the pen,
To trace the village monitor's known fame,
For merit blooms with virtuous Evelyn,
And emulation consecrates his name.

Evelyn my muse impartially repeats,
Evelyn, the pride of Thornley's lone retreat.

CHAP. XVII.

THREE days had elapsed, and Rosalie and Lady Mentoria were just partaking a fine pine after dinner, when the door opened and Lord Edwin limping in, shook hands with his aunt, and bowed gracefully to Rosalie.

“My dear Edwin,” cried the astonished and confounded Lady Mentoria, “what can possibly have brought you to the Abbey, is any accident the occasion of this unexpected visit?”

“A

"A slight one," answered he. "My horse being restive, brushed too close by the wheel of a waggon, and has bruised my leg, the pain of which increasing I thought it most prudent to make the best of my way to Thornley, and not endanger it by proceeding to the Castle; but had I known you was engaged with company, I should not have intruded."

"Oh, that young lady is only my companion, the ward of your father, an amiable orphan, Edwin, who has been bred in an obscure part of Switzerland, Chamouny, I believe 'tis called; our dispositions seem exactly to suit, and I trust we shall enjoy many happy years at the Abbey, occasionally visiting my nieces at the Castle."

Luckily for Rosalie Lady Mentoria had been too much engaged and flurried by the entrance of her nephew, to observe the emotion that agitated the bosom of her fair companion. Delighted to see him—Fearful of discovery

discovery—doubtful if he had really experienced the accident he complained of, and unconscious how to gain a moment's information—a thousand perplexities banished and recalled the rose on her cheek, but very fortunately to relieve her suspense Lady Mentoria begged he would make use of some embrocation, which she retired to fetch from her private laboratory, and the intermediate moment of her absence furnished Rosalie with a full explanation of the artful stratagem he had used to prevent suspicion, by assuring her he was perfectly free from accident, and had flown on the wings of love to enjoy her smiles.

Lady Mentoria just then entering with her embrocation, ended the momentary conversation, and thankfully taking the bottle, he retired to bathe the imaginary contusion, and soon after returned.

“’Tis strange,” said he as he entered,
“my boot should have given me so much
pain,

pain, and yet not the least sign of external injury is perceivable." This he thought a sufficient excuse should his aunt, as the famous village doctress, insist upon examining it and preferring her judgment and skill, so limping as naturally as possible, the Dowerger's credulity was easily imposed on.

In the course of the evening Lord Edwin distantly polite and sedate, introduced the topic of Italian. "You are, no doubt, a proficient *Ma'amfelle*," said he, addressing Rosalie by the most tender epithet in that language, which being entirely unknown to the venerable companion, furnished them the best contrivance possible, "Will you," continued he, "do me the favor to correct any imperfections in that elegant language; conversing with a native I shall doubtless much improve the little I at present know."

"Nay," replied her Ladyship, "you are reckoned to speak it very fluent, why then talk

talk of improvement and correction of error; but don't you mean to write to your father?"

"Certainly not, why should I alarm him," answered he, "you know his timidity would create a hundred ensuing evils, a day or two will enable me to proceed, and he will easily make an excuse for my detainment on the road, as travellers are never certain where curiosity is the deity they seek, and restriction does not clip the wings of time in her purfiance."

Every point of apparent propriety being thus settled, Edwin remained three days at the Abbey, and was then unable to plead longer excuse, while Lady Mentoria, who watched with the most rigid circumspection the conduct of his Lordship, was perfectly satisfied he entertained no other sensation for her fair charge than what his natural politeness and affability inspired, and therefore ordering her low Cabriole, took her seat by the

the side of Rosalie, and accompanied him part of the way for an airing.

Time had hobbled lamely with the Marquis, but when the long expected moment arrived, and Lord Edwin mentioned his delay at the Abbey, the Marquis's blood changed cold; but recovering himself he inquired how his sister was.

"Perfectly well, and happy in the society of her fair charge."

"And what do you think of her?" asked the Marquis, fixing his eyes intently on his son's.

"I think her a pleasing and interesting companion," replied Lord Edwin, assuming all possible sang froid, "a brilliant, the shades of obscurity has not, deprived of its lustre, and I don't doubt a little emulative polish will soon render it a most perfect and admirable acquisition to the envied possessor: She
is

is a pleasant Swift girl, charmingly lively, yet modest and politely diffident, by what little I observed, and I really think she will be a very delightful companion for my aunt, if the gloomy Abbey does not instil too much of the penoso, for 'tis a wretched dull place and would soon give me the horrors."

"My aunt tells me she is the daughter of some humble friend of yours, on whose decease you was appointed guardian: Fortunate orphan! to have the protection of so benevolent a man: Excuse me, Sir, nor think me guilty of adulation, you have ever evinced yourself the best of fathers, and my heart would be ungrateful not to acknowledge your worth."

"She is, alas! the child of misfortune in every sense," answered the Marquis, secretly rejoicing to have extracted the sentiments of his son, "but I shall take care of her with the anxious solicitude of a parent, 'till I can marry her to some worthy and amiable man deserving

deserving her affection, and guided by her inclination: But don't you think her pretty?" added he, darting a penetrating look, if possible to confuse him.

"Humph, yes," answered the cautious Edwin, "tolerable; what can you expect in fact from a complexion exposed to the beams of the meridian, or the keen blasts of the mountainous climate, unguarded by the shades of art or fashion, to repel those extremes so pernicious to a delicate skin; all the beauty Rosalie can boast is the glow of health, that she eminently possesses, and nature has certainly traced her pencil in the purest bloom to animate her cheek, like the wild rose exposed to each inclement ray, still boasting loveliness and purity, while the rude wind that whistles round its head bends with severity its feeble stem, but cannot divest it of its charms: Yet I do not wish to call her handsome, her amiability of disposition will sufficiently endear her to those whose

generous and feeling hearts participate her fate."

The Marquis now left him with a mind relieved from suspicion, and festivity presided the evening circle, 'till Lord Edwin ordering Carlos to unpack his portmanteau, delivered his father a letter from his friend at Paris, informing him his son could not sail for India with Lord Edwin, as proposed, from some particular occurrence, and therefore totally declined the voyage. This was a second annihilation to the Marquis's projects, and fullen and dejected he retired to rest.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE morning brought a number of friends to the Castle, to congratulate Lord Edwin's return, and inquire how soon he intended to sail on his Indian expedition, amongst them was the Duchess of Albemarle, and her daughter Lady Cecilia Bouverie, to whom the Marquis's partiality of genealogy hoped to command the affection of Lord Edwin, as his future bride.

She was too tall to be elegant, her countenance pallid and uninteresting, her dispo-

sition haughty, and her partiality to the follies of dress extravagantly outrè; yet to these imperfections was the Marquis totally blind; to unite the blazoned escutcheon was his sole wish, and, alas! the finer feelings of sensibility were eclipsed by the dazzling allurements of grandeur, even founded on the basis of total disregard; he thought the sacrifice of happiness amply substituted by the idolatry such splendor would revert on his family from the anticipated alliance; love had lost its potent charm in his bosom, the flame was extinct that once blazed, with the spirit of congeniality, and now the corroding worm of insatiate ambition supplied its place. Fatal tyrant! whose uncontrouled power sways every precept; love shrinks from thy baneful influence, pity dissolves in tears at thy predominance, while friendship half withdraws the extended hand of unity, and suspects a lurking thorn concealed beneath the blooming yet fallacious rose of happiness; every virtue is imprisoned by this despot, in its deep recess:

cess: But for thy influence the venerable Tankerville was the tenderest parent, the most faithful friend, and generous benefactor. His pillow was this night strewn with the sharp thorns of suspicion and vexation, which every reminiscence served but to augment, and his sleepless eyes were languid and heavy when he descended to breakfast.

After the repast was ended Lord Edwin was summoned to the library, and the Marquis developed the burthened secret that rankled in his bosom, by declaring his sentiments in favor of Lady Cecilia, and earnestly recommending such consideration to his son.

Lord Edwin unwilling to believe at first, rallied the subject, 'till silenced by a stern look from the Marquis.

"Ah! my dear Sir," said he, respectfully taking his hand, "Edwin avows his real sentiments when he declares, Lady Cecilia boasts no charms to captivate his affection, love

alone must bind the fetter that retains his heart; yet, rest assured, prudence, honor, and virtue shall unite the rosy links of his bondage, when inclination solicits the sacrifice at the shrine of fidelity, and parental affection smiles an approving consent; yet, I beseech you never ask me to bestow that heart on Lady Cecilia, while its inmost feelings reject with painful anxiety its inability to retaliate a mutual impression."

"You are resolved then never to comply," said the irritated Marquis.

"Never while my soul revolts could I be the impious wretch to violate the sacred oath recorded on the page of futurity, under the specious sanction of pretended love, while duplicity alone veiled my disgust."

"Enough, enough," answered the enraged parent, "seal your lips on the subject, nor dare invade my ear with your high flown phrases more; yet remember, the hour you
disobey

disobey my wish, by uniting yourself without my approbation, shall disinherit you from every possible source of fortune I can curtail: Retire and reflect on the obstinacy of your refusal, and when reason cools your heated imagination you may probably relent, and study my happiness as well as your own interest."

Lord Edwin conscious of the stability of sentiment he had just professed, bowed and withdrew.

The Duchess and Lady Cecilia were unfortunately invited to dinner, which was no small embarrassment to Lord Edwin after the subject just discussed; the ceremony of dinner being ended without any particular occurrence, the Marquis proposed an evening ride, and as the Duchess's landau had brought her to the Castle, it was proposed to accommodate the Marquis, Lady Adela, and herself, while Lady Louisa mounted Sir Henry's phaeton, and the Marquis ordered his son's curricule

to convey him and Cecilia purposely through mortification: Lord Carlton and the Honorable Frederic Waldegrave mounted their horses; Sir Henry was to lead the way, the curricie followed, and the landau and horsemen brought up the rear.

Lord Carlton's horse had not proceeded above two miles when taking fright at a water-mill it conquered the skill of the rider and threw him. Lady Adela, who saw the inevitable danger, shrieked and fainted on the Duchess's shoulder, and the whole cavalcade instantly stopped; the Duchess's salts were successfully applied, and Lady Adela revived amidst the confusion of catching the furious animal, who was now too mettlesome to mount, and at the earnest desire of the Duchess and Lady Adela he agreed to take his seat in the landau, though much wishing to continue his equestrian exercise, but to calm the terror of the ladies who so earnestly entreated his forbearance, his polite condescension

tion obediently adopted their plan, and the vicious steed was to be led by the servants.

Lady Cecilia, whose companion had probably not entertained her on the most pleasing or interesting subject, tired with his non-chalance, determined to mortify herself no longer, but put her resolution of quitting her seat in practice, and thereby convince herself of the reality or fallacy of her suggestion, not doubting from his cool insipid behaviour her company was totally indifferent to him, and begged to exchange her seat with Lord Carlton, as one of the curricule horses had become very mettlesome since the rapid flight of the other, and declared her agitation would not permit her to go any farther.

Lord Edwin secretly rejoicing at her ridance, instantly offered his hand to alight, assuring her, he was apprehensive of the animal's becoming rather unruly. Lady Cecilia suffered him to lead her to the carriage, into which she hastily jumped, and took her seat

by the Marquis's side, who much chagrined, told her, he wished she had kept her station, as she would have had a finer view of the prospect he wished to shew her.

"Oh dear," replied she, "I have seen none yet worthy admiration, and Lord Edwin complains of the head ach, which, of course, rendered our gossip very insipid; I detest to hear of ennui, much more endure it, it vapours me to death in five minutes, therefore I thought it best not to increase it by my chat, so we have not uttered more than a monosyllable each this half hour, I through compassion to his brain, and he through inability either of subject or inclination, and I never admire statuary you know," adding a sarcastic laugh.

"If these horses should grow unruly," said Lady Adela, raising herself to watch their prancing, "poor Lord Carlton may experience a second fall, and as I have no fears on the

the subject, I can go with my brother and accommodate him with my seat."

"Not for the world," replied the voice of Lord Carlton, at the carriage wheel, while Lady Adela glowed like crimson.

"Surely," returned the Marquis, "the men are most proper objects to encounter difficulties, and if any should arise providence *your* prayers will preserve them no doubt."

The strong emphasis laid on *your* prayers, uttered ironically, silenced the deeply interested Adela; and Lady Louisa and Sir Henry were in fact the only real enjoyers of this intended pleasure. Lady Cecilia found no beauties to commend in the view she had been brought to observe; dissatisfied and peevish every object increased her disgust, and lolling on the Marquis's arm with vacant stare, she just deigned to acknowledge a beautiful natural cascade that heightened the

charms of a picturesque view, was "Pretty enough"

"Inferfate!" thought Lord Edwin, as he handed her to the carriage, "How would Rosalie's eye have wandered o'er this charming spot, and discovered a thousand beauties my perspicuity had never remarked, while this insipid mortal finds no perfection from the circle of her toilet, nor acknowledges a beauty she does not conceive centered in her own imaginary elegance."

Carlton sat lolling home in the curricie, musing on the energy of Lady Adela's sollicitation, to brave the apparent danger, and resign her safer seat to him.

"Moralizing Mentor!" said Lord Edwin.

"Yes," answered he, "on human virtues in their most captivating form."

"And I on human frailties in their most formidable and disgusting view; thus we differ:

differ: I wonder which reflection will turn to most advantage."

"That we must profit by on mature investigation," replied Lord Carlton, "every vice has its moral, from which we may improve as prudence and inclination shall direct, did we always associate with the amiable part of mankind we should be at a loss to preserve ourselves from the snares and corruption of the evil disposed, and fall a prey to their ingenuous duplicity, under the specious sanction of candour and virtue; morality is the most interesting, yet least observed study of nature, and thus it is we entail calamity by the impositions daily practised on credulity; but what shall we say of the man whose view of vice is shaded only by a veil, whose texture is thinner than the finest gauze, if he obstinately fears 'tis too much trouble to examine the picture, by raising the film that obscures it, and therefore trusts to the judgment and honor of some bye-stander to explain its properties, as best suits his own
digested

digested plan: Such a character is surely as pitiable as it appears contemptible, and dear bought experience too soon convinces him he has become the dupe of artifice when too late to retract."

"Bravo," exclaimed Lord Edwin, "I shall record these sentiments with a golden pen, on the tablet of friendship, thou excellent monitor."

Various subjects ensued 'till they reached the Castle, and Lord Edwin, though very polite, could not obtain one smile from Lady Cecilia, he was not the man of gallantry to her taste, and she therefore hastened the Duchess's departure, as early as possible.

Lady Adela had one morning retired alone to the pavilion, and Lord Carlton accidentally soon after bent his steps to the same spot, but finding the door fastened, he ventured to tap, and Lady Adela imagining it one of the servants, laid down her crayon and
turned

turned the key, when opening the door Lord Carlton appeared on the steps, and she started with surprise.

“I hope I do not disturb you,” said he.

“No,” replied Lady Adela, much flurried, and cautiously drawing a paper over a slight sketch she had just made, placed it in the drawer, but unfortunately the lock would not turn, and Lord Carlton offered his assistance.

“Something prevents its shutting,” said he, and pulling it open, the paper slipped from the drawer and discovered his own picture; but with the greatest presence of mind he avoided disclosing his surprise, and shutting the drawer turned and presented the key to Lady Adela, who, unconscious he had seen it was perfectly collected: Not so the bosom of Lord Carlton, who had not wanted this proof to confirm his suspicions and utmost wish, and he now determined to gain the advice

vice of Lord Ewin, and solicit him to reveal his design to the Marquis; 'twas now the fortunate moment of explanation, and he determined to improve it, as Lady Adela had so charmingly revealed her own secret when least intended.

CHAP. XIX.

ROSALIE in the mean time was become the Angelic Divinity of the Abbey, beloved by Lady Mentoria with the affection of a parent, and adored by every soul who knew her; once she had created an alarm amongst the peasants on the shore, by strolling one evening to the cliff with her lute, whose soft and dulcet note just reached their ear in faintest sound, and brought them from their suppers to listen; she was seated on the cliff, and being dressed in white the reflection of the moon on her countenance gave her a palid appearance, and justified the ex-
press

press idea of an apparition: The alarm soon spread, unknown and unheard by Rosalie, who deeply occupied in musing on a very different subject, suddenly rose and turned away, while the cottagers variously gave their opinions on the wonderful appearance, while timidity instilled innumerable conjectures as the elevation of the cliff prevented distinct observation, and before they had time to discover what it could be, the figure vanished.

Lady Mentoria was writing in her study when Rosalie returned, and not wishing to disturb her, she thought the moonlight so inviting that she bent her steps to a large balcony, on the flat part of the Abbey roof, between the battlements; it was formerly erected to command the prospect, but had been seldom visited for many years past; the door that led to it at the end of the gallery having been accidentally discovered by Rosalie, she had chosen this opportunity of exploring the boundary, and therefore strolled out to gratify her curiosity.

“Here

"Here she amused herself half an hour, and then descended to the parlour, where Lady Mentoria willing to amuse her, rung the bell, and ordered her attendant to fetch down a port-folio of maps, and an old terrestrial globe from a lumber-room in the East wing of the Abbey.

Martha took the keys but turned pale as death. "Thomas, or Austin, can help me to bring it down, my Lady, I suppose?" asked she, while the keys jingled from the tremulous motion of her hand.

"And why not go alone?" said her Ladyship, "you know the room."

"Yes, my Lady, but then I must pass the door that leads to the balcony."

"Well, what of that?" replied Lady Mentoria.

"Oh,

“Oh, the ghost!—Indeed, indeed, Madam, Austin and I was walking in the courtyard this very evening, and we saw, by the light of the moon something as white as snow whisking between the battlements, without a head; I am sure I was not deceived, for though our folks have often said that wing of the Abbey was haunted, I never believed such nonsense ’till now my own eyes have convinced me; and Austin watched it, and put on his spectacles, but he could not make it out.”

“My good Martha,” said Rosalie, laughing heartily at her description, “Do not alarm yourself, for I was the formidable ghost without a head, upon my honor; but I am sorry my innocent walk should have created such unnecessary terrors.”

Martha grew instantly composed. “To be sure, Madam, I was scared out of my wits, for I had not been in our hall talking above five minutes, before in comes William, who
had

had been round to the cottages on the shore to order some fish, so says he, this is a long-legged ghost, it has made good haste, for our fishers saw it a-top of the cliff, not an hour ago; 'tis a merry one too, for they said they heard music in the air at the same time, and all the women and children scampered into the cottages frightened to death.

“ Ah!” said Rosalie, “ I wandered there too, and thus the mystery is unfolded, therefore assure yourself you may safely venture up stairs for you will see no more ghosts there this evening, and do me the favor to remove the prepossessed ideas of your associates, by revealing the truth.”

Martha now quite satisfied, tripped up stairs with a light heart, doubly invested with courage, and Lady Mentoria enjoyed the jest at her expence.

Rosalie, to oblige her friends at the Castle, penned the following stanzas during her recreation

clusion at the Abbey, in her lonely morning and evening strolls; 'twas a charming romantic spot, but her fancy now depicted its desolate decay at a future period of a half century's ravage on its gothic pile; and Lady Mentoria much pleased with the production of her youthful poetess, treasured the manuscript in her cabinet.

THE DESOLATED ABBEY.

As musing fancy guides me o'er the lawn,
When moonlight beams upon the mould'ring tow'r,
I take my pensive seat by some rude thorn,
On which once bloom'd the blossom's pallid flow'r.

Alas! luxuriant scenes, by fancy chang'd,
Methinks I view thee crumbing o'er the earth,
Where in these foilag'd groves so oft I've rang'd,
And watch'd of every rose the genial birth.

When

When rural elegance some fete compos'd,
Oft' have I join'd the sprightly roundelay;
In rich pavilions sweetly have repos'd,
And tasted banquets sumptuously gay.

Here stroll'd at day-break with my fav'rite lute,
'Midst od'rous shubb'ries exquisite perfume,
When ev'ry sound save echo'd plaint was mute,
And zephyrs wafted fragrance from the bloom.

Here if some wand'ring wretch, the child of fate,
Told his sad tale and humbly ask'd relief,
No furly menial drove him from the gate,
Humanity beguil'd the tear of grief.

Methinks yon tott'ring tower's turret peeps,
Through twining ivy fragments rude project,
Prolific round each battlement it creeps,
As if the poor remainder to protect.

Now where th' historic page depicted gay,
In beauty trac'd on the transparent pane,
Will shatter'd drop neglected to decay,
And cobweb films alone their place retain.

The

The noble hall too, by the helmets grac'd,
And cheerful horn which oft' blithe echo rung;
'Midst antient warriors stately portraits plac'd,
As mould'ring trophies be neglected hung.

And damps exhaling from the dreary wall,
O'er faded tap'stry their rude marks will leave,
Thus desolate in ruin will it fall,
Of every former elegance bereav'd.

When gloomy midnight veils departed day,
The screech-owl refug'd in some dark recess,
Will hail the circling bat who wings her way,
To some more fav'rite niche frequented less.

Then fancy raises the chimeric tale,
That some pale spectre nightly haunts the tow'r;
Firm in the village such reports prevail,
Where superstition combats ev'ry pow'r.

Such tales related every peasant hears,
Where if the abbey he must pass at eve,
Ideal fancy added to his fears,
Presents some phantom which his thoughts conceive.

Alas! could ev'ry heart with truth assert,
Its virtues pure as those this mansion own'd,
How blest 'twould be to share their real desert,
By meriting the tears their mem'ry mourn'd.

Embosom'd 'midst the drooping fir and pine,
With solemn cypress and dark mournful yew,
Methinks the tombs of ancestry reclines,
In drear mausoleum neglected too.

Here would I stroll then to the solemn shade,
Indulging pensive thought to friendship dear,
Pluck the last blossoms 'ere their beauty fade,
And consecrate them with a heart-sprung tear.

To these sad wilds I'd sigh a last farewell,
And then reluctant quit each well known haunt,
With grief each bubbling stream would seem to swell,
And solitary bend the drooping plant.

While the park-gate with hideous grating slam,
Will seem to bid exclusion to each foot,
Where the gay foilag'd oak that screen'd yon lamb,
Will leave no trace except its knotted root.

Of't have I sat beneath its spreading shade,
While to my lute some lark has warbled sweet,
When in full elegance surrounding glades,
Their native beauties blushed in this retreat.

The well-known bench too moss will over creep,
And where each rose in gay luxuriance hung,
Rude tangling weeds will proud dominion keep,
And nettles group the spot where blossoms sprung.

Disrob'd the forest and the ravag'd vale,
I scarce a path or avenue shall trace;
For where the elm now rustles in the gale,
Prolific briars will supply its place.

Wild-berries clust'ring on its fraggling thorn,
Will then remain to mark the shrubb'ry's bound;
O'ergrown with weeds the solitary lawn,
To mem'ry scarce 'twill prove its high renown.

The dreary thought my sinking heart appals,
And tremblingly I quit the fancied gloom;
Alas! like this each human fabric falls,
And gradual sinks oblivious in the tomb.
Majestic ruin! noble in decay,
Thy fame shall live when thou art sunk away.

A few days after a severe touch of the gout attacked the venerable Dowager, who constantly at those periods repaired to the Castle, for the particular attendance of a favorite physician, in consequence of which they immediately set out, travelling by short stages 'till they reached the Castle on the third evening.

Miss Villars was that day on a visit to the ladies, when the invalid arrived, and Lord Edwin flying to the carriage, assisted the Dowager to alight, while his countenance could scarce assume the semblance of sorrow due to the sufferings of his aunt, as Rosalie followed Lady Mentoria into the parlour, supported between her nephew and Montague. Lord Edwin's chair stood vacant by the side of Miss Villars, but was instantly removed to the opposite one between the Dowager and Rosalie.

Miss Villar's eyes were fixed on the transient exchange, while Rosalie had as intently observed the situation of the vacated

D 2

chair.

chair. "Upon my word, you are an excellent nurse, and indeed shine superior in that character to any other," said the imperious amazon.

"I always was," replied Lord Edwin, "Lady Mentoria will vouch for me, I have frequently devoted my evenings to backgammon, for her amusement, while my sisters have joined some juvenile party in the neighbourhood."

"A fine compliment to the belles and beaus," rejoined Miss Villars.

"A proof at least of the young man's humanity and condescension to an old woman, neglected by the youthful part of her own sex, afflicted with an infirmity heaven may in time retaliate on them."

"I hope I shall never have the gout," answered the haughty fair, "or at least if I have,

have, I hope my ill temper will never add to the trouble I shall then be to every body."

"It must undergo a thorough and speedy reform," replied the offended invalid, "for the impetuosity of youth will never be softened by the infirmities of age; it will trebly augment peevishness, not diminish it, depend upon it, young lady."

Rosalie, hung tenderly over her chair, endeavoured by a thousand little stratagems to alleviate the pain, and divert her attention, while Miss Villars turning on her heel with a half smile, asked Lord Edwin, if he was too much occupied to take a stroll for the benefit of the air.

"Ah, do," cried Lady Mentoria, "and take Rosalie with you, it will revive her after the confinement of a close carriage." Lady Adela joined the request, and Lord Edwin escorted them.

Lady Mentoria now asked the Marquis if he had any objection to Rosalie's remaining at the Castle, or if he chose she should return.

"No," replied he, "let her stay, I think I have probed the heart of Edwin, and found no wound to penetrate, I am therefore easy on that subject."

The evening passed merrily away and Rosalie retired to a new apartment facing the portico of oranges, the evening was fair and clear, myriads of diamonds studded the azured veil of night, and fragrant odours embalmed the breeze, when something lightly tapping at her window called her attention, and she opened the sash, when a small note, fastened to a string, was thrown up and reached her hand; it was Lord Edwin, whose billet earnestly entreated she would allow him half an hour's chat in the pavilion, by seven o'clock.

Rosalie

Rosalie nodded assent but spoke not, shocked at his temerity, as Lady Mentoria's chamber joined hers, and he might have been discovered, she therefore closed the blind and prudently withdrew.

CHAP. XX.

THE Dowager recovered from her slight attack, and was persuaded to pass a month at the Castle, during which time Rosalie improved rapidly in her drawing and music, and her soft melodious voice was to give its first specimen of delight at a private concert, given at the Castle ; numerous friends and neighbours were invited, and among the rest the Honorable Frederic Waldegrave paid his first visit since Rosalie's arrival: Struck with the charms of her person, he lost his usual sprightliness in the pleasing contemplation, and was her constant shadow the whole evening, while Lord Edwin, who silently observed

served his motions, was deeply concerned and much agitated.

Lady Louisa presided at the grand piano forte, Lady Adela exquisitely touched her harp, Lord Carlton performed on the violoncello, and Lord Edwin took his animating mellifluous flute, while Sir Henry flourished the sprightly horn, and two strangers subjoined their enlivening violins, Rosalie chose the fantastic tamborine, and two songs, with an inimitable charming composition, adapted for her favorite lute, constituted her share of the performance; she was purposely habited in the Savoyard stile, and captivated every beholder; her beautiful solo on the lute received unbounded applause, and when she dropped it negligently by her side, Waldegrave instantly caught and applied it to his lip.

“Do you play, Sir?” said the sweet girl.

D 5

“No,”

"No," replied he, "I am only endeavouring, like the bee, to extract the honey from these little cells, because those charming lips have pressed them."

Rosalie unused to adulation, felt herself at a loss to give a proper reply, and Lord Edwin coming towards them at the instant, happily relieved her embarrassment.

"Rosalie," said he, lay by your magic lute, your next enchantment will be a song."

"What is it?" asked Waldegrave, touching the leaves of a rose placed on her bosom, "The Mansion of Peace?"

"No," answered Lord Edwin, perfectly understanding the question, "that privilege is reserved for a chosen few; the song she favors us with is to aid the inspiration of Adela's harp, and will convince you 'tis not ill adapted to the soul of the enchantress."

He

He then led her to the orchestra, and whispered her to beware of Waldegrave's freedom, which he did not at present dare resent. The assembly observed a profound silence, and the beautiful Rosalie and elegant Adela drew forward and began Mrs. Crouch's favorite song in the Heirefs; 'tis true, the warbler had often practised it, but to night she excelled every former attempt: The benignity of her countenance, and the forcible expression laid on every line, captivated each attentive auditor, and a general whisper of praise buzzed in every part of the room.

Waldegrave roused from his enchanting reverie with a profound sigh, and again repeated his encomiums; the Marquis passing at the moment pressed her hand, "you are a good girl, and have pleased every body."

"She has enchanted them!" replied Waldegrave, "every body as if inspired by magic,

gic, repeats but the name of this bewitching fyren."

The Marquis astonished at this rhapsody, led him away, and the evening passed cheerfully on, but the succeeding day brought Waldegrave to the Castle, on some frivolous pretence, while Lord Edwin was airing, and Rosalie was unfortunately alone in the pavilion, finishing a small drawing, while the ladies had retired to dress. Waldegrave delighted beyond expectation, seized the happy moment to explain his raptures, offered her his hand and fortune, and assured her of his unalterable attachment.

"Silence, Mr. Wakdegrave," said she, withdrawing her half-devoured hand, "you honor me too far, reflect for a moment to whom you are imparting your sentiments, bordering surely on unguarded extravagance, I must not, dare not, believe them the deliberate effusions of sincerity, surely they must
be

be the uncontrouled suggestion of the moment, mere inspirations of gallantry, yet however devoid of propriety, are, I trust, founded on the basis of honor."

"Perfectly so, charming Rosalie, nor time nor absence shall erase the faithful fond impression, tell me then, lovely angel, if Waldegrave's hopes may live in thy bewitching smile; or, doomed to meet thy frown, must he resign that treasured heart to some more happy rival?"

"Alas!" said Rosalie, "I boast no heart to give, 'twas lost in the peaceful vale of Chamouny, 'ere I knew these plains."

Waldegrave turned pale, his lips trembled, his hand grew cold as he grasped hers: —
"Ah! tell me then," said he, "whose bosom guards the inestimable treasure, and I will fly to hear the tale, where if I find him, as perhaps I may, unburthened with the gifts of fortune, my ample purse shall well supply the
same

same deficiency, 'till it has rendered his more humble roof completely worthy of so fair an inmate; then may I live to hear my Rosalie is blest, and Waldegrave, wretched Waldegrave, asks no farther recompense."

He now turned from her to hide the manly tear that flowed in spite of every effort to retain it; and Rosalie, stung to the soul, remained a perfect statue of astonishment."

"Permit me to retire," said she, in a low and tremulous voice, "unable from the overflow of gratitude to thank you as I ought, and incapable of expressing what my lips would fain utter; yet, may every blessing, every tranquil joy surround you, and may the heart your fondest love shall chuse, return with equal rapture and sincerity thy matchless generosity and affection, while the poor humble Rosalie shall waft her purest prayer to heaven for your felicity—wretched boon I grant, but 'tis the sacred incense of a heart
that

that would give more if love and honor did not hold it captive."

"Generous girl!" answered the still more enraptured Waldegrave, "And must I resign thee? Oh! cruel fate: Yet tell me, I beseech you, the name of my rival, and I will cherish the envied robber with the affection of a brother, while he returns the fond careffes of my Rosalie; but if a shade of slight, however transient, cross the sun-shine of thy happiness, then Waldegrave's arm shall plunge a dagger in the monster's heart, and free the angelic sufferer from his frown."

Rosalie shuddered with horror, for his countenance during this energetic speech had assumed every fury of real sensation. "We must meet no more then," said she, "you grow furious, ask no further questions, I beseech you, but leave me to my fate."

"Never,

"Never, 'till you tell my rival's name and residence, that I may accomplish my promise," rejoined Waldegrave.

"That I cannot reveal at present, I have cogent reasons, but when time shall developé my fate, the heart that claims the humble Rosalie's, shall generously own, and strive to imitate the excellent virtues and gratitude of a Waldegrave: Adieu then, I must fly to my chamber, or my length of absence will create suspicion."

"Adieu too lovely Rosalie, a few days will convey me to the asylum of a faithful friend, whose tender admonition will console my wounded peace." Once more he kissed her hand, and darting through the shrubbery with the air of a maniac, mounted his horse, which he had fastened to a tree at the entrance of the park, and retired unseen by any soul.

Rosalie was transfixed to the gate over which she had leaned, her eyes filled with tears,

tears, her hands clasped and raised to heaven in silent ejaculation, when the sound of Sir Henry Lansdowne's phaeton roused her lethargic stupor, and turning quickly back into the house she entered her own apartment, where the most painful reflections agitated her palpitating heart. "I must assume duplicity at the expence of discretion," sighed she, "for should the tale ever be revealed, what misery might it not entail on such a dreadful discovery to Lord Edwin! O, heaven avert it; already he observes the partial praises of Waldegrave with the keen eye of suspicion, and strictly repels them: Fatal secret! repose then in my bosom, where I will cautiously guard thee, and all will yet be well." —

"All did I say? Alas! no—poor Waldegrave, where wilt thou find the balm to heal a wounded heart? Not on the frozen mountain—not on the burning sands of India—nor in the fostering clime of peaceful happy England; for, Oh! no balsam can extract the venom, bloom in what soil it may!"

Her

Her eyes had lost their usual lustre, when she descended to dinner, and Lord Edwin observed it, but Rosalie assuring him he was mistaken, and assuming a gaiety of heart foreign to her feelings, it all passed off.

CHAP.

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CHAP. XXI.

A FORTNIGHT elapsed and Waldegrave had never appeared at the Castle, when a morning visit from Miss Villars, the chronicle of the vicinity, proclaimed his departure.

“ So Waldegrave has left his mansion suddenly, on a trip to his friend Ellers, at Lime Park, and the beautiful eminence that overlooks Rose Vale is put in immediate design, several workmen are employed, and as I passed, seeing them very busy, I asked for what the structure was intended. ‘ Why ’tis
for

for a hermitage, Ma'am,' says a grey-headed shrivelled old man, 'his Honor intends it to be very curious and complete, he has given us orders to proceed in the outer work, and then he will lay out his plan as his fancy strikes him.'

"Why this is quite a new whim," said I.

"O dear yes, my Lady," continued he, "and it will be a vast *solontory* place, I told his honor the birds would make pretty free, for there's a power of all sorts thereabouts: O, says he, never trouble yourself about them, their company will amuse me, and their song will amply repay their intrusion."

"Why yes," says I, "your honor, was always good natured to every body, but you will have a few songs from the rooks as well as the larks, and that's mighty dismal."

"That too I shall equally enjoy," replied he, "so don't disturb them if they hover about."

"It is a mighty odd notion we think, but to be sure we have only to obey orders."

"Thus ended the elegant harangue, and I rode off; don't you think it a fine romantic scheme; what a blooming hermit he will be, Lord Edwin, suppose we make a formal visit."

"Never disturb the reveries of solitude," answered Lord Edwin, "can the flame of his inspiration, by all means, 'twill turn to good effect no doubt, when so young a man gratifies the bent of such reclusive inclinations."

Rosalie, who had listened to every syllable uttered by Miss Villars's shrivelled old man, as she maliciously stiled him, was at no loss to comprehend the mysterious enigma. "He is then in reality," thought she, "and the fatal impression is to be nursed in the shades of solitude, where it will never be erased."

Lord Edwin surmised some secret scheme actuated Waldegrave's design: Naturally of

a careless lively disposition, could youth like his assume the careful brow, and woo the shades of seclusion, inventing every penforoso embellishment to complete the solitary structure: What turn the fervent page of enthusiastic reflection by the pale gleamings of a melancholy lamp, when revelling and mirth had ever led him captive in her jocund train, amid the alluring charms of love and beauty? Immured within this lonesome cell, he must then pour the votive prayer to some peculiar deity, however he would keep his sentiments private, and watch the event, as some slight suspicion from his conduct to Rosalie had awakened a dormant spark of mistrust, yet to doubt the purity of her heart on the subject was an idea consigned to perpetual oblivion, for he conceived the chain of honor and affection too firmly bound for the utmost strength and ingenuity to loose.

Rosalie had written an affectionate letter some time since to Madelon, and this day received an answer from her favorite friend,
fraught

fraught with the faithful and kind remembrance of every cottager in the vale, and Lindor had inclosed a rustic sonnet, of his own composition, on the departure of Rosalie; the verse was simple yet interesting to her heart, 'twas a memorial of gratitude where least expected, and it expressed the genuine dictates of an honest worthy bosom, that had ever evinced a similarity of sentiment undisguised by duplicity; it was the first specimen of Lindor's poetical talents, and where an error required regulation, the effusion of sincerity it meant to express perfectly compensated; for untutored in the school of criticism, Lindor presented it in its humble and native guise, relying on the lenity of the goddess, to whom his rustic muse had made her first oblation.

LINDOR'S

LINDOR's SONNET,

ON THE

DEPARTURE OF ROSALIE FROM THE VALE OF CHAMOUNY.

Ah! who shall hail the fassion morn,
Now lovely Rosalie is gone?
Who tie the vine by cluster's bent,
On rugged steeps where oft' she went?
Who cull the flow'rs, or pluck the fruit,
Who sing so sweet to Lindor's lute?
Alas! the moon-light dance no more
Enlivens us at ev'ning hour,
And e'en our blitheft philomel,
Forgets her plaintive woe to tell:
The roses drooping wet with dew,
Now seem to mourn her absence too;
The wand'ring Chamois piteous still,
Oft' seek her on each neighb'ring hill;

Then

Then disconcerted, Sleats his pain,
And slowly straggles back again :
Oft' when the story's simple jest,
Amuses 'till the hour of rest ;
Alas ! fond mem'ry will review,
How swift the rosy moments flew,
When Rosalie endear'd each scene,
Fair Rosalie's Chamouny's Queen.

There was a certain pathos in these simple lines very pleasing to Rosalie, and she read them with the greatest emotion of delight ; the letter also express'd the earnest solicitation of Josephine in case her friend should ever marry, that she might come over to England and be her attendant : Madelon's tender tears had blotted many expressive sentences, dictated by her grateful heart ; and the prayers of Reuben and Geraldine for her health and happiness concluded this valued epistle.

Rosalie gave the letter and sonnet into the hand of Lady Adela, and Lord Edwin, as he perused them, smiled with tearful eyes at this proof of affection, while he traced in imagination every anxious eye peeping into the contents, willing to add a thousand tender expressions had the paper been capable of containing them.

“Gratitude always affects my eyes,” said Lord Edwin, giving the sonnet and letter into the Marquis’s hand, who had minutely watched his son’s countenance during the perusal, “I wish your heart too was as susceptible of obedience,” replied the Marquis, hinting at his son’s refusal of Lady Cecilia, for alas! the thorn of disappointment had secretly rankled in his heart ever since, but the extreme cautious behaviour of Edwin and Rosalie eluded every suspicion; Lord Edwin, who did not wish Rosalie to understand the meaning of the address, bowed and left the room.

Lady

Lady Mentoria was to remain at the Castle for the ensuing winter, and Lord Edwin had taken a trip to London for a fortnight with Sir Henry Lansdowne; the rich autumn was declining, the air grew sharp and frosty, but Rosalie never failed her constant ramble before breakfast, to supply the expected meal of five robins, who pecked the crumbs from her hand, and whom she always stiled her plumaged pensioners; employed in this delightful occupation of benevolent humanity, they soon grew tame, and would often perch on the nearest shrub, and repay her attention with a grateful song.

Having one day missed a favorite from the circle, and strolling in search of him to his well known recess, in an adjoining thicket she found the little hapless songster frozen by the inclemency of a severe frosty night, apparently dropped from a favorite thorn, and stretched on a mass of snow, from whose frozen surface it was impossible to extricate its feeble wings: Compassion gave a trick-

ling tear to the sufferer's fate, and Rosalie in memory of him, dedicated an elegy as she sat pensively musing o'er his stiffened plumes and deploring his loss.

THE FROZEN RED-BREAST'S ELEGY.

The snow-crown'd thorn its sheltering verdure lost,
The whistling tempest every leaf had cropt,
Each twig was spangled by the gelid frost,
And o'er the wither'd branch the Robin hop'd.

His orange breast with pendant brilliants shone,
His frozen wing refused its wonted aid,
No leafy nest or blossom-foilag'd throne,
Could give the little sufferer any shade.

The moon shone pallid on the drifting snow,
And faintly ting'd the pine-clad mountain's head;
Loud from each cavern did the wild winds blow,
While ev'ry isickle refulgence shed.

On

On the lone spray my shiv'ring Robin clung,
Whose legs-benumb'd could scarce support its weight;
His heart beat low, a plaintive note he sung,
A note portending his approaching fate.

Ah! had but pity whisper'd in my ear,
Or accident reveal'd thy hapless fate;
To my warm bosom I had press'd thee near,
And strove thy tender life to renovate.

But as in search I stroll'd at early dawn,
'Ere the gay sun in glory had arisen,
Beneath the wither'd elm and fav'rite thorn,
My robin's life had left its plumag'd prison.

Now Rosalie shall with assiduous care,
Place the fond æriel in a grassy bed;
And in fond mem'ry plant a blossom there,
To mark the spot that pillows robin's head.

Softly at eve, as passing through the vale,
I pause to listen at the well-known tree,
Where his companions plaintively bewail,
And seem to thrill his pensive elegy.

From this charming amusement she had one morning just entered the house, when Andrew met her in the hall. "A poor traveller is without, resting himself," said he, "he seems weak and feeble, so I asked him into the housekeeper's-room, but he refuses and is sitting near the great gate; he seems more unhappy than hungry, I think, for I offered him some victuals, but he shook his head and said he was only tired: He asked if the family were up, and I said no, only Miss Rosalie."

"Poor fellow!" said the sympathizing girl, "I will go and see if I can relieve him."

In a few moments they reached the bench on which sat a person wrapped in an old fur-tout and a flapped hat, an oak stick rested his hands, on which leaned his head in the attitude of profound reverie, 'till the airy footstep of Rosalie gently pattering on the gravel roused him, and he raised his head,
but

but spoke not, for Andrew was close behind gazing stedfastly on him.

“Can I relieve you, friend?” cried the soft voice of Rosalie.

The traveller bowed, placed his hand on his bosom, and presented a small piece of paper, when Rosalie unfolding it read the following words.

“Pardon and commiserate the victim of despair, and allow five minutes conversation at the end of the south terrace to the wretched Waldegrave; govern your surprise, impart a plausible relief, and follow the wanderer.”

Twice did she read it to recover her agitation, when taking out her purse to aid the dissimulation, she gave him a crown which he thankfully received, and rising, took his immediate departure.

"Poor creature," said Andrew as he fastened the gate after him, "he was very modest, for he did not ask me to carry in *that there* petition for charity, so if you had not been up, Madam, he would have gone away almost as poor as he came, for I had but a few halfpence in my pocket, and that would not have made him much richer, God knows."

"It would not indeed," said Rosalie, "for he seemed no common beggar, only a child of misery, Andrew; but as I could not relieve his sorrows more fully I did not wish to hear his mournful tale."

"God give you his blessing, for you are all charity and goodness, sweet angel lady," muttered Andrew, as she tripped away to the terrace, where the disguised mendicant raising his hat, discovered the well known features of Waldegrave.

"Whence

“Whence this cruel unguarded surprise, Mr. Waldegrave?” asked the fair trembler, leaning over the parapet, while he seized her hand: “Beware,” continued she, “the temerity of this intrusion, and be also expeditious in what you have to disclose, that you may depart undiscovered before the family rise.”

“I returned last night,” said he, “to my desolate mansion, where I inspected my hermitage, but found it, like every thing else, devoid of the charms my fancy depicted: I shall now leave it in the course of a week, and bend my steps to London, where I have procured an India equipment, a few short weeks will conduct me to my solitary cabin, where, to the mercy of the winds and waves I commit this miserable form; the burning plains of India will be less scorching than my heated brain, and each will consume the other with greater precipitation: Will Rosalie, then, deign to breathe a prayer, amid the fury of impending storms that dash his hapless

E. 5

bark,

bark, or will she give one sigh to pity, as the trembling moon beams through her window, and recalls to mind the wretched Waldegrave watching the same pale luminary's midnight lamp, reclining o'er the lonely deck's vacated platform, while the rough mid-watch mariner, whose eye is alone unsealed on board the vessel, whistles in plaintive strain the weary hour away, yet leaves despair and horror chained to me, whose pillow planted with remorseless thorns, the points of which are oft' bedewed with poignant tears, no longer rests his languid head, or soothes him to repose. Adieu, angelic purity, to-morrow brings me to the Castle to take my formal leave—Ah! here could I linger all the live-long day, and sleep beneath the covert of these elms until Aurora lifts the torch of day, and with her rosy finger opes the gates of morn, to cast a longing look of expectation, and behold thy lovely form, enchanting as the roseat hour, steal to this lonely spot, and give one smile, one glance of pity to the woes of Waldegrave."

Rosalie's tears had steeped her handkerchief in briny essence. "To-morrow then," said she, "I shall see you again, Mr. Waldegrave, yet, believe me, if opportunity does not furnish me with the means of bidding you adieu as my gratitude would wish, I shall ever entertain the highest sense of the obligation your sentiments have avowed for me, yet, miserable must I ever be when I reflect on the cause that drove you from your happy mansion, the blest abode of tranquillity 'ere my unhappy fate guided me to this spot to tear that blessing from your bosom; yet, oh! forgive the wretched girl, and strive to conquer an ill-fated love, which, circumstanced as I am, would surely be profane to hear: Be firm, be resolute, and submit to the decrees of fortune, suffer your wonted peace and happiness to return, and preserve your inestimable good spirits for the benefit of all those most nearly concerned in your welfare."

The distant appearance of Le Brun obliged him to sigh, adieu, and disappear, as fast as possible, while Rosalie returned to the breakfast table, ill disposed to swallow a morsel.

CHAP. XXII.

LORD EDWIN and Sir Henry being in London, Rosalie was pensive, a thousand painful ideas engrossed her mind. Lady Louisa, in consequence of her swain's absence, became dull, and her charming sister could only alleviate their ennui, by chatting and rambling with Lord Carlton, the only remaining beau, whose engaging sensibility had so far gained the Marquis's favor, that he had readily acceded to his wish, by permitting the increasing passion to cement between him and Lady Adela, and the next spring was to confirm the
the

the happy union, as also the nuptials of Sir Henry and Lady Louisa, an event anticipated by the Marquis with the greatest delight, and his felicity had attained its summit, if Edwin too had accepted the hand of Lady Cecilia, but that was not to be, and a very different circumstance was reserved to prove the affection of the Marquis.

Several little parties had been formed to interest and amuse the lingering hours, when Frederic Waldegrave arrived at the Castle, and invited the family to partake a farewell dinner at the Manor, which was readily accepted by the Marquis, who earnestly enquired his motives for leaving England.

"I wish," said he, "Edwin would accompany you, but he is so biggotted to his Parisian friend, that because he declines going this year, no persuasion can induce him to make the trip."

"And

“And probably I shall not stay long in the West,” replied Lord Waldegrave, “therefore I should only lead him astray, for I shall be a wanderer at large, where fancy or inclination directs.”

Such a negligent reply silenced the Marquis's inquiry, and Thursday was the appointed day for the visit to the ~~the~~ Manor. Rosalie dressed herself plain as possible, tho' she was convinced Miss Villars and every belle in the vicinity would endeavour to out-rival each other.

At four the company assembled, and were entertained with an elegant dinner, festivity and hilarity prevailed without alloy, and the evening being very inviting, the Marquis proposed sailing on a fine canal, that ran through the extensive pleasure grounds; the sailing-boat was ordered out, and the party took their seats.

After

After an hour spent in the most agreeable manner, a threatening cloud presaged a violent storm, which soon veiled the atmosphere. Rosalie terrified, sunk on the shoulder of Waldegrave, and the company landed as fast as possible, and made the best of their way to the house, but as Waldegrave supported the trembling Rosalie, a vivid flash crossed the path, and again she sunk on his arm: Each gentleman fully employed with their respective charges, hastened on, all equally frightened, and saw not the relapse of Rosalie, who happened to bring up the rear, and Waldegrave, recollecting the hermitage to be but a few paces distant, bore her thither, and as it was probable the storm would increase, had endeavoured to prevail on the rest to take shelter in its recess—but in vain, as they thought best to retreat before the shower fell to prevent their flight, as they were at least a quarter of a mile distant from the house.

Waldegrave

Waldegrave now carried his lovely burthen to the solitary structure, so lately completed, laid her on a couch, and flew to get some water, when supporting her head to raise it on his arm, a small pearl cross, confined by a ribbon, discovered itself on her bosom; instantly Waldegrave slipped the string, and, purloining the treasure, secreted it in his own bosom, as the only memorial of her he should be able to obtain, instinctively he pressed it to his lips, and then consigned it to its future repository.

Scarce had he recovered the agitation of his secretion when Rosalie opened her eyes, and wildly inquiring where she was, expressed the greatest terror at her situation.—The hermitage grew dark, the storm increased, and Waldegrave soothed her fears by every tender assiduity: But, equally alarmed at being alone and subject to his addresses, she earnestly entreated to brave the storm and venture on.

“Impossible!”

“Impossible!” cried he, “it pours in torrents, patience, lovely Rosalie, you are perfectly safe; we shall soon be missed, and the servants will be sent to accommodate you with shelter of some kind, I cannot leave you alone or I would fly thither; be composed, I think I see somebody coming through the vista, but the flashes are so vivid I cannot discern who it is.”

A few moments brought Thomas and Gregory, with the family sedan, and a coat and umbrella for their master; for the company terrified at their absence, were fearful some accident had happened, and the fury of the tempest prevented any but the servants from coming to their assistance.

Waldegrave instantly placed her in the chair, and walked slowly by her side to pacify her fears; at length they reached the house and entered the drawing-room, where the party were assembled; every one but Miss
Villars

Villars exprest their concern at Rosalie's indisposition.

"Was not the hermitage a mighty snug retreat," cried she, "I wonder Miss Rosalie should faint there; methinks in the protecting arms of Mr. Waldegrave there was little occasion to *affect* terror, for my part, I began to think you both inclined to pass the night there, 'twas ~~devilish~~ unlucky Gregory should think of the old mouldy sedan, to interrupt so charming a tête-à-tête.

"I conceive it a very lucky thought of Gregory's," answered Rosalie, "and feel myself much indebted to his civility and good nature."

"Had he been as maliciously disposed as the envious part of mankind," replied the Marquis, (leering at Miss Villars,) he would not so readily have invented a burthen for his own shoulders; but I am sorry to see malice so expert in sharpening her arrows on a female lip,

lip, yet, I trust, the feathers they are fledged with are so light and frivolous, that though a breath sends forth a volley in every direction, they seldom wound; for, depend on it, the shield of innocence repels the misapplied dart, and the disappointed archer feels the point retaliated with the venom of vexation to her own mischievous bosom."

Waldegrave's eyes thanked the Marquis most eloquently, while Miss Villars, smiling derision, yet compleatly and justly ridiculed, replied, he was an excellent monitor, but would probably meet with very few scholars from the severity of his precepts.

"And yet, I dare avow," rejoined the Marquis, "I shall very seldom have occasion to use my correction a second time if my pupils are as susceptible of the sting as I wish them to be, though I shall never inflict it improperly or undeserved."

Some

Some of the ladies whispered, and some of the beaux smiled, for the subject had been most completely handled at the sole expence of Miss Villars, who, unable longer to support his severity, instantly took her leave, mortified to the soul, and determined never to pass another moment in his presence.

The storm now abated, and the carriages drew up to convey the company home, when Rosalie fastening her cloak missed her pearl cross, the gift of Lady Adela: confused and vexed an immediate search succeeded, but in vain, and Waldegrave assuring her every part of the grounds should be searched where it was probable she could have dropped it, handed her into the carriage, and took a final leave.

On the second day he departed for London, where he met Lord Edwin, and Sir Henry, from whom he received every friendly wish of a prosperous voyage, and a few letters of recommendation to some friends of Sir Henry's

Henry's in the West India settlements, and early in the following week they accompanied him on board, while Lord Edwin, as he quitted the ship's side, (from whose gallery Waldegrave waved his hat) found his heart relieved of a heavy suspicion that had long rankled there, founded on the dread of rivalry.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

ROSALIE unsuspecting of the innocent robbery committed by the hapless wanderer, often regretted her loss, although the generous Lady Adela had supplied its place, with an elegant fancy medallion; little did she think that cross was daily bedewed with the tears of faithful love; little did she know how oft' it pressed the feverish lip of hopeless passion, as it rested on the panting agitated bosom of despair.

Lord Edwin and his companion returned on the appointed day to the Castle, his countenance

tenance was cheerful as the finest summer's morn, his soul serene and happy as its softest balmy breeze. Rosalie was delighted at his return, yet a soft sigh sometimes heaved to the sorrows of Waldegrave.

The winter wore away its languid hours in the pleasures of agreeable society, sometimes shared at the Castle, or passed at the Abbey, and when the joyous spring peeped forth and smiled, Lady Mentoria conducted her young companion again to the Castle, for the summer recess. In its beautiful blossomed groves Rosalie and Lord Edwin often strolled in pleasing converse of an evening, when the fragrance of the blossom embalmed the breeze, and philomel, wild poet of the glade, thrilled her soft cadence half concealed, amid the mazes of her foilaged nest, while the majestic crescent encircled by her floating silver fluid, mantled the vagrant rill, and tinged the drooping elegance of numerous willows, sheltering the rose-fringed banks, and reflecting its sylvan beam on the enraptured countenance

countenance of Lord Edwin, as he gazed, the lustre of Rosalie's bewitching eyes vieing their contrast with its feeblér ray.

"My Lord, the Marquis approaches," whispered Montague, from a thicket of Seringo's one evening, "turn through the shrubbery while I detain him." Instantly they followed the admonition of their kind protector and escaped separately to the house.

The summer now drew on her rosy veil and shaded the retiring spring, who left her blossoms to the fostering hand of her maturer care, and Rosalie, Lady Adela, and Lady Mentoria had just returned from a visit at the Abbey, and all the little circle were again cheerful and happy; the caution of Lord Edwin, had eradicated every suspicion from the bosom of the Marquis, who, although not perfectly reconciled to his rejection of Lady Cecilia, loved his son too well to render him miserable by enforcing his commands, when a circumstance destined to unveil the long-

secreted mystery, presented itself when least furnished.

The sultry sun of July had emitted an almost insupportable heat through the day, and with the shades of evening followed a succession of black clouds, impregnated with bituminous matter, deep streaks of red fringed their lowering inflamed edges, and foretold an approaching tempest.

The ladies alarmed at the excessive loud peals of thunder that soon followed, and the vivid flashes of blue lightning, had retired to an inner apartment, less exposed to its direction, when a loud ringing at the lodge gate demanded attendance, and Montague announced the servant of a stranger earnestly soliciting assistance for his master, whose horse taking fright at the lightning, had thrown him with the greatest violence against a projecting rugged branch of an ancient oak that overhung the park railing, where he had been obliged to leave him in search of assistance,

ance, as he was unable to proceed; and to add to his misfortune, the horse had fled, but seeing a light in the Lodge it encouraged him to hope for some relief.

This sudden alarm created the compassion of the whole family, and three of the servants were instantly dispatched with orders to bring the stranger to the Castle, and when their voices in the hall announced their return, the parlour was instinctively vacated, and the whole family assembled.

The unfortunate man was of very genteel appearance, about forty years of age, totally inanimate, and half covered with blood, from a contusion in the side of the head. Lady Mentoria drew near to offer her advice and inspect the wound, while the three beautiful girls, like benignant angels, stood weeping o'er the hapless sufferer, with upraised hands and countenances expressive of the deepest horror.

A surgeon was immediately fetched, though at the distance of five miles, and at Lady Mentoria's request the stranger was laid under the rich canopy of crimson velvet, in the state bed chamber, where life again revived with languid pulsation, but not the faculty of reason; that, alas! seemed chained by heavy stupor, and he remained many hours in a state of torpid insensibility.

On the surgeon's arrival he pronounced the contusion dangerous, but not so near the brain as was apprehended, nor could he ascertain the consequences which might ensue; however, he hoped the best, ordered him to be kept in a state of perfect tranquillity, but declared that removing him would be of dangerous tendency. Mrs. Gertrude was deputed to set by him, while his servant unpacked his portmanteau, and the Marquis could gain a little information of the rank and character of his invalid, but of this the domestic declared himself ignorant, he only knew his master's name was Spencer, and that

that he was just returned from the West Indies, had hired him about three weeks since in London, during which time he had resided at an hotel, but was now on their tour to N—, at the house of some very intimate friend of his master's, from whence they were going to some part of Italy and France.

This account, though plausible, was by no means satisfactory, and as the servant proceeded to unpack, the delicacy and fineness of the linen, marked with the initials of E. W. created a suspicion of fallacy in the Marquis's breast, which he carefully concealed, and Gertrude resigned her situation to his own servant, and one of the Marquis's for the night, which was passed in tolerably tranquil slumber.

The Marquis, anxious to inquire the state of his guest, stole softly to his chamber in the morning, where, finding the door open, he ventured gently in, when he heard the voice of the stranger earnestly repeating the

following soliloquy, and rested on tip-toe that he might not surprise or interrupt him : the voice sighed and thus proceeded.

“ Sure ’tis illusion, or my eyes beheld the fair resemblance of my faithless love :—Angelic form ! sweet placid innocence, if such thou wert, cast one soft smile of pity on thy wretched Walsingham ! — Adored Lavinia ! Hapless victim of seduction, Ethelbert loved thee with unfeigned sincerity : Though thou wast base, perfidious, and contaminated by the breath of vile iniquity :—Cruel accursed Morency ! Impetuous injured Walsingham ! ”

The Marquis shuddered with horror, the name of Ethelbert Walsingham had been engraven on his heart, with a pencil of adamant, dipped in poison. He advanced one step and peeping through an aperture, in the curtain, beheld the feeble invalid raised from his pillow, his hands clasped in the attitude of imploring pardon, and his eyes fixed on a half length portrait of Lady Lavinia, which
hanging

hanging immediately opposite the feet of the bed, convinced him of the reality of his suggestion, and, overpowered with confusion, surprise, and distress, the Marquis sunk on a chair, and, drawing aside the curtain, fixed his eager eye on the stranger, whom he was unable to address at the moment.

“To whom, Sir,” asked the feeble man, “am I indebted for the compassion and indulgence I have apparently received, tho’ alas! the suspension of recollection deprives me of the idea of what favor my hapless state has experienced; I have dozed the night away, and just rousing from an irritated unconnected dream, I recall my scattered senses and find myself alone in the mansion of a stranger, whose benevolent humanity seems to have furnished me with every comfort in a style of elegance I am by no means entitled to, and the information of knowing to whom I owe such obligation will still add one more to the number.”

"You are now in the Castle of the Marquis of Sevigné," replied the agitated Marquis.

"Sevigné!" reiterated the breathless stranger, "And that portrait Lady Lavinia, his sister? Gracious heaven! do I in you behold the noble owner of this Castle too?"

The Marquis bowed assent, and the stranger continued:

"Alas! then let this devoted head sink in eternal slumber on your soothing pillow; fly me, for I have been a murderer, but, culprit as I seem, I yet shall sue your mercy. I could unfold a tale would harrow up your soul, if you will grant me but an hour's explanation, then shouldst thou spurn me like a miscreant from thy roof, I will not call thee harsh, I will not murmur."

A convulsive motion prevented his articulation, as he violently grasped the hand of
the

the Marquis, but recovering, he begged the door might be fastened to prevent interruption, and then proceeded.

“First draw the curtain,” said he, “and veil that angelic face, my brain is frantic, and every sense disordered while I gaze on it.”

The Marquis, softened by his agony obeyed, and begged him to proceed with composure.



CHAP. XXIV.

“**I** WILL endeavour to disclose the most minute circumstances; the painful task will cost me many a pang, but, ah! gracious heaven, how many has it created you? Forgive thou peaceful soul, and seal my pardon with one word of comfort.”

A tear crossed the Marquis's cheek, and the stranger proceeded.

“'Tis now near nineteen years 'ere I first visited the family of M. Tourville at Paris, where the accomplished and beautiful Lady
Lavinia

Lavinia captivated my heart. A native of England, but bred from my infancy on the confines of India, of noble parentage and good fortune, I had left my parental home to visit the shore of England, from thence I bent my hapless course, alas! to France, recommended by an intimate friend to the notice of M. Tourville, I became almost an inmate of his hospitable mansion: Need I tell you, it was impossible to behold this angelic woman without eternally wearing her chains—to me they were rosy fetters, and while she smiled upon my hopes life could not boast a higher blessing; my fond heart doated to distraction, and I had the undescribable satisfaction of finding my affection returned with the most ardent sincerity, which was crowned by the nuptial benediction four months after my arrival, but as my birth and fortune were not equal to her's, the secret was reposed in the bosom of a sacred few, but carefully guarded from M. Tourville."

“Alas! at his house now visited the graceful and alluring Chevalier De Morency, whose partial glances, and, to me, insolent assiduities, never passed unnoticed: My angelic Lavinia firmly repelled the repeated insolences of this troublesome intruder, and had not the most obvious reasons prevented my disclosing my sentiments, and asserting the rights of my protection, a few days had probably happily ended the business; in vain did Lavinia conjure me not to be uneasy, adding, a few short weeks would convey us to India, should Lady Mentoria, her aunt, and the Marquis, her father, withdraw, as she much feared, their countenance from her, in consequence of not having aggrandised, or united herself to some family equally illustrious with her own: For her sake then I remained silent, and her smile calmed all my fears and lulled suspicion to oblivion.”

“A few days after, having occasion to go to Versailles, I left my beauteous bride, proposing to return on the third evening, and
after

after receiving and imparting the most tender and faithful adieus, I set off, but scarce had reached my destination when a billet was delivered me, the bearer of which departed from the hotel an hour previous to my arrival, and was a total stranger. The hand was unknown and I hastily tore it open, when the following lines, now recorded on my heart, presented themselves."

"Fail not to return to Paris to-morrow evening, at the hour of nine, conceal yourself in the shrubbery near the temple, and witness the virtuous assignation of the Chevalier Morency, and the artful abandoned Lavinia: — Victim of duplicity, 'tis thine to punish."

"My blood froze with horror, my brain was on fire—could it be possible?—Ah! no. Yet love, honor, justice demanded me to attend the summons, and I obeyed, previously concealing a poignard to avenge my unmerited injury, should I discover the cruel fact."

"Punctual

"Punctual to the moment I arrived, disguised and concealed, I awaited the dreaded appearance, when through the branches of the trees I soon discovered the white robe of Lavinia, advancing by her side in all the rhapsody of love, walked the specious villain, one of whose arms encircled her waist, while the other grasped her hand to his lips: Lavinia, 'tis true, repelled the freedom, but as they passed I distinctly heard her utter these words.

"Leave me, Chevalier, 'tis imprudent we should longer absent ourselves from the company, fly me, I conjure you, 'ere your presence is too fatal to us both; should Walsingham return and find you here, what misery might we not be involved in; you know my resolution, which neither time or circumstance shall make me break, and as you value the peace of Lavinia be discreet."

"But to-morrow," cried he, "will you suffer me to enjoy half an hour's chat in the morning?"

"Yes."

“Yes,” answered she, “if you will swear never to betray your extravagant affection before Walsingham, nor give him the least cause for suspicion; away, then, your horse is waiting and I must return.”

“Morency again pressed her to his bosom, and retired, while she strolled back heaving the deepest sighs, alas! too surely for Morency, for to a mind inflamed as mine, every spark brightened to a blaze, and had I not heard sufficient to warrant my suspicion, and convince me of her baseness?”

“Instantly I darted from my concealment, and hurrying to my horse, rode on full speed to the confines of a thicket I knew he must pass, and as he entered alone, I seized his bridle, discovered myself, and demanded restitution for my wrongs, but the sneering villain mocking my agony, asked me for whom Lavinia’s heart most glowed with love? For whom she shed the pensive tear, or heaved that parting sigh, but for himself?”

“If

"If 'twere indeed for thee, villain!" answered I, "thou never more shall boast; this to thy heart, an injured husband plunges but one poignard, while in his breast thou hast implanted thousands never to be extracted."

The fatal steel pierced his heart, and he fell lifeless at my feet, while furious as the agitated maniac, I mounted and galloped off, leaving the body exactly where it fell, to the fate that might await its discovery. Reflection, alas! soon convinced me I was a murderer, and the pangs of conscience were too acute to be borne."

"Imagining the alarm such a circumstance would occasion, I made the best of my way to Calais, and that evening sailed in the packet for England, where I no sooner arrived than I wrote Lavinia, reproaching her with her perfidy, and confessing myself the executioner of Morency, and bid her an eternal adieu: Cruelly as she had treated me, my heart still relented so far as to instigate an idea
of

of future provision for her, in case our union should be productive of a helpless and innocent victim, I therefore enclosed different sums to the amount of one thousand pounds, but what I suffered on the occasion is much easier felt than described, and I embarked for India in the course of a fortnight, but had no sooner reached my father's house than I was informed he had paid the debt of nature six weeks since, and he being a widower, of course his estates of every description fell to my possession ; settling his affairs as expeditiously as possible, I was persuaded by an intimate friend and school-fellow to settle near him in the West Indies, an offer I thankfully accepted, and he purchased in the most advantageous manner extensive plantations, and a proper number of slaves for me, and under his direction and advice every thing was conducted with the utmost regularity."

" I had now no method of inquiring the state of affairs in England for two years, when this estimable friend set off on a trip for this hospitable

hospitable shore, to his bosom I had confided my secret, and from his pen I received the following information. That M. Tourville had communicated the story to you, who had searched every part of England to discover my retreat; that Lavinia had given birth to a daughter, and had ended her days in penitence and sorrow soon after at Montpelier. The child, he added, was at nurse somewhere in Switzerland, under the care of M. Tourville, and I conceived I had fulfilled my duty in the provision I had advanced for its maintenance."

"Yet the spark of parental affection was kindled in my bosom, and urged by the impulse of nature, I determined repeatedly to come over to England, when by the intelligence of persons predetermined to subvert my intentions, I learnt, my infant had followed its mother to the bourn of tranquillity."

"My plantations were fruitful, my slaves diligent, yet the thorn of sorrow and remorse
was

was not eradicated by the balm of prosperity, when a second voyage of my friend's, near fifteen years after, again revived my hopes, and 'ere the stern winter of life deprived me of my wonted ability to sustain the voyage, and reconnoitre every circumstantial event, I resolved to hazard the attempt of visiting Switzerland, and protecting my child, as indubitable authority from the pen of my friend assured me I still was a father, and my blooming offspring, who was the express image of her mother, was an humble resident in the cottage of Reuben Demouline, in the Vale of Chamouny. Bent on this project I was directing my course to the seat of my friend at N—, who would have accompanied me on my tour, when this dreadful accident beset me and left me an almost lifeless being at your hospitable gates."

"Is it then the punishment I merit thus to be thrown on the mercy of an offended relative; or is it ordained by Providence I should be rendered the instrument of eclairecissement.

cissement. Patient and attentively have you listened to my fate without the interruption of a single reproach; from Lavinia I had formerly heard of your residence, but believe me, as I passed the road I little intended to have intruded, or discovered myself, unpermitted by your kindness; as the victim of fate I implore your pity; the rashness of untroubled jealousy, the impetuosity of slighted love, once the most pure and fervent, led me, alas! to the pinnacle of desparation, for by heaven, an angel had not convinced me the detested information was a truth, if oral and ocular demonstration had not too sadly revealed the cruel fact."

Here Walsingham burst into tears, and sunk on the pillow, while the Marquis giving him a glass of water, again took his seat.

"You have, 'tis true," said he, endeavoured to clear your mysterious conduct, and had but Lavinia lived she would have exculpated her innocence, and you might yet have
been

been happy, but your rash cruelty inflicted too deep a wound to find a cure; alas! she pined in secret, and M. Tourville, to conceal it from the world, removed her to the cottage of his tenant Reuben, where she was delivered of a daughter, whom Giralbine nursed, but her health daily declining, she was removed to Montpellier, where the faded lily drooped and died."

"To have brought home the little Rosalie would have exposed my sister's injuries, blazoned her misfortunes, and excited the calumny of every malicious tongue; and as I had faithfully promised her never to reveal the secret to my own family 'till time should elucidate your conduct. I simply told my aunt Lavinia had died of a consumption at Montpellier, nor does she at this moment know Rosalie is my niece; for seventeen years M. Tourville visited his little charge, and Montague, as my substitute, paid his annual visit, with the pension allotted for her board, but on the decease of M. Tourville, eighteen months

months since, I conceived it my duty to fetch her from this solitary recess, and confess myself her guardian."

"My indefatigable search of you proving fruitless, I determined leaving it to the sole direction of providence; I have sacred papers by me shall soon convince you of her injured innocence, for, by heaven, she was purity itself: Excuse the emotions of my heart, sacred to the memory and virtues of an adored sister, while for the sake of her lovely child now under my roof, I will strive to conquer my enmity to her fatally-misguided father; yet remember, your parental affection alone can induce me to cherish the man whom honor should teach me to abhor; and may heaven in mercy pardon your errors, and reclaim your virtues, as you expect countenance from me. To-morrow, if the surgeon permits, you shall see your child, in the mean time I must develope the story to Lady Mentoria, as too sudden a surprise might endanger her health."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

THE Marquis now left him and returned to the parlour, where he related as briefly as possible the whole occurrence. — Lord Edwin was all agitation: Rosalie, dissolved in tears, and would have flown to her parent's apartment while the lovely sisters sweetly soothed her woe, and breathed the sigh of pity to the sad, sad tale.

Lady Mentoria, who doated on her unhappy niece, felt the unexpected stroke of misery most poignant: "Lovely sufferer," exclaimed she, as she perused the explanatory letters of Lavinia, which the Marquis had
consigned

configned to her care, previous to delivering them to Walsingham, and though she possessed the firmest principle of humanity and commiseration for the distressed, a harsh invective at first escaped her lip, as she condemned the ferocity of Walsingham.

On the following morning Rosalie followed the Marquis to the chamber of the invalid, whose impatience would not be pacified from embracing his child, although the surgeon pronounced any irritation would increase his fever, and protract the effect his aid tended to produce.

He was just risen when the lovely girl, scarce able to conceal her joy, entered his chamber, and flying to embrace him, sunk on her knees; a copious torrent of tears luckily relieved the full bosom of Walsingham, as he tenderly raised and embraced her.

“Alas!” said he, “is it thus I fold to my heart the angelic image of a dearer self?”

Here

Here let me trace the blushing beauties of my sweet Lavinia, thou sole blest gift of heaven:—Oh! her expressive eye still beams in thine, her dimpled smile yet lingers on thy rosy cheek, and thy soft dulcet voice recalls her animating tone. Distraction fires my brain—come to my arms, my dearest Rosalie, and let a father's penitential tear fall on thy bosom and erase the sad impression his impetuous crime has deeply written there; forgive my love, and deign to bless a miserable misguided father.”

Rosalie clasped his hand, in silent agony, and pressed it to her bosom, “I will be all obedience, all affection, dearest Sir,” said she, “and may you long live to trace in me the virtues of my honoured mother,” pointing to the portrait, from which the distressed Walsingham hid his eyes.

“Talk not of injured innocence,” cried he, “for, alas! that conviction would unman a stoic, much more a wretch like me.”

The scene grew too affecting and the Marquis begging Rosalie to retire, soon after left him.

Three days elapsed, during which time Walsingham was confined to his bed, in consequence of his irritation of mind having heightened the fever, and Rosalie attended him with the most affectionate care: He had also solicited the letters the Marquis had promised him, the effect of which so agitated him he was obliged frequently to lay them aside, at the request of the tender Rosalie, whose tears flowed with equal poignancy as his own, and almost overpowered her drooping spirits:

One page in particular, read by Rosalie, whose voice could scarce articulate, almost drove him frantic; 'twas a full confession from Lady Lavinia, recounting the reason of her meeting the Chevalier that fatal evening which terminated his existence and her happiness.

Morency

Morency, it seems, had used every seductive and adulative argument to induce her to elope, supposing her heart then entirely at her own disposal, and vowing vengeance on Walsingham for his repeated and impertinent intrusions, little suspecting the privilege he was entitled to usurp. Lavinia, terrified for the safety of her husband, conjured him to banish the idea of revenge, and on pain of her eternal displeasure ever to reveal, or cause Walsingham to suspect his partiality, thinking, by this means to avoid the dreaded encounter of an innocent, yet offended, husband, and a furious and resolute lover, whom in reality her soul abhorred; but her placid amiable disposition, ever void of offence, strove if possible by gentle entreaty to prevail on Morency, while her terror depicting every calamity from so fatal a determination, had, in order to conceal it under the solemn threat she had made, met him on the terrace that evening, to extort the performance of his promise, and by that means insure the safety of her ever valued love, and what diabolical fiend could

have discovered the assignation, known only to themselves, was a mystery her utmost vigilance could never develope.

This proof of affection stung Walsingham to the soul. "Is this the dreadful truth?" cried he, "Fatal victim of credulity: Alas! how the frenzy of jealousy veiled my senses: Yes, I heard her repeat every syllable this letter avows, but deaf to reason or a moment's reflection, I construed every sentence in the most different light, and can only recompense her wrongs by promoting the happiness of my child, which shall be the study of my existence."

Rosalie now laid aside the papers, and Walsingham giving her the key of his portmanteau, begged her to take out his pocket book for something he wished to find, and turning over several letters a small piece of paper fell to the ground, which Rosalie picking up presented to her father. "I do not recollect what it can be," said he, "open it,
my

my love." Rosalie obeyed, but it instantly fell from her hand and she turned pale. "Oh, 'tis the pearl cross," said Walsingham, "the amiable Waldegrave's legacy:" But observing the agitation of his child, (who stood almost petrified, gazing alternately on him and then on the bauble) he caught her hand, and inquired the cause of her astonishment. "Only do me the favor, dear Sir, to inform me how you came in possession of this trinket, and I will then answer any question you please to ask."

"I received it," said he, "from the hands of a Mr. Waldegrave, a handsome comely youth, who was unfortunately shipwrecked, but saved by the timely assistance of our boat; he had floated four hours when he hailed our vessel, and we happily preserved him, but a fever ensuing in consequence, a few days terminated his existence: I must own I was particularly struck with his figure and affable deportment, and never left his bed 'till he expired, a few minutes before which he took

from his bosom this cross, pressed it to his lip, and begged me ever to keep it as the sacred relic of a faithful but unhappy lover.

“My story,” said he, “like myself, will be consigned to oblivion, nor shall I reveal the name of the angel from whose bosom I purloined this treasure, as it is very improbable you should ever behold her, yet should chance so ordain it, she will instantly recognise it when you repeat the hapless possessor of it was Frederic Waldegrave.”

Rosalie burst into tears. “Alas!” cried she, “’tis mine: And didst thou, hapless Waldegrave, treasure to the last moment of thy existence, this humble memorial of poor Rosalie?”

Walsingham soothed her. “More mysteries than have I elucidated,” said he, “but tell me, my lovely girl, the whole affair, in which your heart, alas! seems deeply interested.”

Rosalie

Rosalie obeyed, and repeated every minute circumstance, much to the satisfaction of Walsingham, who was delighted with her prudence, while, sweetly blushing, she faintly acknowledged the prevalent partiality of Lord Edwin.

“A secreted passion was the source of your misfortunes,” said the sweet girl, “and heaven avert it should be mine; in your bosom I repose my confidence, and earnestly solicit you will ever keep this little legacy in your own possession, as I must never wear it more; its history would create alarm in the bosom of Lord Edwin, and might throw a shade across my future happiness, although I solemnly avow I never entertained a thought injurious to the love of Lord Edwin, yet my bosom, ever alive to the sensations of friendship and compassion, instigated me to retaliate lenient politeness and gratitude, where prudence forbid a greater sacrifice; and sure the heart must be invulnerable to pity that did

not feel a pang for the sufferings of meritorious virtue, and consecrate one tear to the hapless remembrance."

Walsingham then consigned it to his pocket book, embraced his child, and promised inviolable secrecy of his treasured memorial.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

ON the day following he was permitted by his surgeon to leave his room, and take his seat at the family table, where the glances of melancholy often obtruded for it had occasioned great inquiry and surprise amongst the household, although the affair had been smothered as much as possible, yet as Rosalie had ever been declared an orphan, it was necessary to report the decease of her father had been a fabrication, and he was now restored, by an unforeseen event, when in pursuit of his family and friends: Such was the

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prevalent

prevalent story, and curiosity was tolerably suppressed.

The Marquis now began to perceive with regret, the partiality of his son, and taking him one day into his study, reprimanded his terror, on Rosalie's being stung by a hornet, as it plainly discovered an unusual degree of alarm and attention in the agitation of his anxious countenance, when Lord Edwin, unable to conceal his sentiments, confessed his interviews at Chamouny, and solicited, with the unfeigned tear of earnest love, his blessing and consent to an union of heart and sentiment—heaven only could dissolve.

“Is it thus, Edwin, your duplicity has exulted?” asked the Marquis sternly, glancing a look of ferocity on his son; “And has the fallacious snake I fostered in my bosom thus planned its grateful retaliation, by leaving its sting in the recess that protected it? Ah! Edwin, I much fear the whole blame of this unfortunate attachment rests with you, for
sure

sure the heart of Rosalie is too pure, too tender, to harbour a thought injurious to my peace; speak then, confess yourself culpable, if you have led the little stray lamb from its native vale, over each tempting flow'ry path, will you abandon it on a thorny precipice, from whose impending cliff it must perish in the gaping abyfs, or gradually linger, like the stricken deer, forlorn and desolate, still bounding from steep to steep in search of comfort and protection, yet still augmenting but its misery: Part of the tale is now explored that long concealed her fate, but the clue is still tangled, and requires to be unravelled, and 'till elucidation explores every particle of disguise, Edwin shall never be united to Rosalie, for though I revere her virtues, and love her with the affection of a parent, no stigma shall rest on the offspring of Tankerville, no calumniate lip shall repeat corruptive censure, I therefore rely on your discretion, 'till a farther explanation, and confess your temerity astonishes me; your indulging a passion for an object totally un-

known, and so humbly bred, must, if you had reflected a moment, have convinced you of the impropriety of your conduct: Supposing Rosalie had been the cottager in reality she was represented, would your unbounded passion have gratified itself by subjoining the distaff with the crested helmet of your illustrious ancestry?"

Lord Edwin paused, fearful of irritating the Marquis, who seemed to be impatiently waiting his reply, and therefore summoning courage, and couching his sentiments in the most submissive form, he thus replied,

"If you require me to express the real effusions of the sincerity I feel," answered he, "the virtuous soul, graceful amiability, and unfeigned gratitude, I discovered in the lovely girl, had surely made me forget the properties of nobility, and in her cottage the splendor of high life had, in comparison, excited my pity and disgust, for I could there trace such interesting scenes of nature in her boundless

less luxuriance, as would have expanded your heart with every sublime inspiration it did mine. Chamouny was then to me a Paradise, and Rosalie the benignant angel to guide and explain the mysterious powers of creation, that raised my adorative ejaculation to the bountiful divinity, whose prolific hand had thus raised the wonderful and admiring beauties of this elysian vale."

"You are mighty romantic," said the Marquis, "moralize no more, let prudence seal your lip, you know my sentiments; for though Rosalie is a woman I think perfectly formed to create happiness, yet, remember, consanguinity is my very aversion; however, I neither give nor extort a promise, for your happiness is too near allied to my heart to wish ever to subvert it, retire then, and leave me to my reflection, for my heart is at present too full to converse more on this subject."

Edwin

Edwin bowed and was opening the door, as Rosalie gently tapped, unknowing the Marquis was in conversation, much less conceiving she was the subject of the tête-à-tête.

“I hope I don’t intrude,” said the lovely girl, the express picture of beautiful innocence, with a small basket of roses, “Permit me to request your acceptance of this charming rose, for I know it is your favorite flower as well as mine; I have just gathered a few, and am come to place it in your bosom as soon as I have divested it of its thorns.” and seating herself on a duchess by the side of the Marquis, took out her scissors to clip them off.

The Marquis turned his eyes on Lord Edwin, who stood rapturously gazing on her in the attitude of admiration, with the door half closed, who catching his father’s glance, silently pointed to Rosalie, pressed his hand to his heart, and sighed as he reluctantly drew the envious blank between them.

Rosalie’s

Rosalie's hat shading her eyes as she was busily employed, had concealed the reciprocal glance that had been exchanged, and she wondered at the Marquis's unusually-cool reception. "Why so silent, dear Sir?" asked she, modestly placing the rose in his bosom, and making a smiling courtesy.

"May you, Rosalie, be ever as careful of planting a thorn in my bosom as you have been to guard me from the wound of these ; but retire, my love, I am engaged with my writing, and cannot be interrupted ; take charge of your present again, and preserve it 'till we meet at dinner, when I shall be more at leisure to admire it, and thank the attentive donor."

Rosalie sealed the pardon of her intrusion by kissing his hand, and, wishing him good morning, left him to his private meditations.

"What could the Marquis mean," thought she, as she stopped to admire the geraniums
in

in the gallery windows, "by bidding me be careful of implanting a thorn? Yet, he did not angrily reprove me, and I am sure I am not conscious of deserving his censure."

Such were her reflections, when her father passing through the anti-chamber, disturbed her.

"Rosalie," said he, "I have just received letters from London, in answer to those I wrote three days since, and am sorry to say, I have very unpleasing accounts of a considerable debt, by the failure of a capital merchant, and must in consequence set off to-morrow for the Metropolis, if the Marquis is in his study I must speak with him, as the merchant is a friend of his, and he, in consequence, can advise me what measure is most expedient to adopt."

Rosalie expressed her concern, and Walsingham passed on to the study, where delivering the letter he almost petrified the Marquis,

quis, who, after deliberating in the most judicious manner, determined to accompany him, and render every possible service to both parties; his chaise and four was ordered by seven the next morning, in which the travellers taking their seats drove off.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

LORD EDWIN had now opportunity to disclose his father's conversation to Rosalie, and each secretly rejoiced at the favorable aspect of their future hopes.

The Castle vacated by its senior inmates, the juvenility of the remaining group formed numerous sprightly amusements, unbiassed by the contradiction of Lady Mentoria, who, although too far advanced in years to join the festive dance, still loved to preside and enjoy the delight they partook.

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When the travellers arrived at the Hotel they retired to rest, and next morning proceeded to the house of Mr. Stanley, where the dreadful complication of his affairs baffled all hopes of compositive adjustment, and at the suit of a merciless peremptory creditor, he was seized, sent to a spunging-house, and all bail refused ; thither they immediately repaired, and found the forlorn object a prey to misery, severe reflection's acute pang, and the victim of extortion.

The Marquis making himself known, offered bail, and a person was dispatched with a note to the creditor, begging the favor of half an hour's conversation.

During the interval of his absence a hackney coach drew up to the door, and a number of vociferous tongues in the passage roused the Marquis's attention, and he opened the door, where he discovered several men inhumanly dragging a genteel-looking female, who was struggling to draw the hood
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of her cloak over a face that bore the vestiges of sorrow and oppression.

“Why, you need not be so fearful of shewing your face,” cried one of the savages, “’twill be pretty well known in a few days at the prison, where it is my thoughts you’ll be glad to make your market of it for a meal’s meat, or egad you’ll soon be starved.”

“Never insult distress,” said the Marquis, removing his huge paw from her delicate arm. “Suffer me,” continued he, addressing the head officer, “to inquire the fate of this poor helpless creature.”

“Why she is placed here for half a year’s lodging, at the suit of her landlord,” answered he, “and it seems no one can give bail for her, but its no wonder, this is always the fruit of wicked deeds.”

“Morality from a person of your description,” rejoined the Marquis, “ill suits, and

I shall only form my opinion from the circumstances I collect from her, whatever inference you may have drawn from them I am inclined to be lenient, would you were also; however, let the coach wait half an hour, during which time I will be answerable your prisoner does not escape dishonorably."

The officer bowed and conducted the female to a private apartment, the Marquis and Walsingham followed, and the door was closed, when the female not wishing longer to conceal her face, threw back her cloak, and to the fancy of Walsingham discovered a set of features not totally unknown, though much impaired by distress, nor could he at the moment recollect where they were once so familiar to him."

"If an account of my unfortunate life can claim any pretension to your favor, gentlemen," said she, "I shall conceive it an obligation which I owe to your humane interference: Scarce need I say, I am enlivened
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on the page of destructive error, as a wretched victim of shame and sorrow ; I have seen thirty-six years, half of which, alas ! could not on retrospection afford one instance of prudence, virtue, or honor : Deprived of my parents very early in life, I was left to the care of a morose old guardian, from whose severe restriction I eloped with a young officer at the age of eighteen, and from that hour I date the commencement of my sorrows."

" Abandoned by my friends and relatives I had no remaining source of protection, and betrayed and involved in ruin, necessity compelled me to pursue a course of life I once should have shuddered at. Innumerable have been my transgressions, and once the impetuosity of real and fervent love instigated a crime founded on jealousy, no penitence of mine can ever reclaim : Alas ! had Wallingham loved like me, the wretched Caroline had never practised the cruel scheme that eternally has banished his peace."

Here

Here a flood of tears prevented her recital, while the Marquis and Walsingham were rivetted to their chairs with astonishment.

"Answer, wretched woman," said the latter, "if to the name of Caroline you subjoin the title of Bertie?"

"I surely do," answered she.

"Oh God!" reiterated Walsingham, "the measure of my woes are then complete, can you not on recollection trace on these sun-embrowned features the resemblance of Walsingham?"

Miss Bertie earnestly gazed on him, uttered a shriek, and fainted; the distracted inquiring Walsingham speedily revived her, while the agitated Marquis awaiting the dreaded discovery, involuntarily drew his chair farther with a look of relentless abhorrence, on the torture of suspicion, and for a moment compassion vacated the recess of his bosom, while

while relieved by the friendly effusion of composing tears, Miss Bertie thus continued.

“Heavens! am I again doomed to behold the victim of my duplicity? Yet, 'ere I am conducted to my penitential cell, suffer me to repeat the cruelties I have inflicted, and the innocence I have injured: Chance, you well know, first threw me in your company at the Opera, and under your friendly patronage I subsisted in elegance and happiness, for my heart at that time, though void of every impression which tended to virtue, still felt the most ardent and sincere love for you, but in three months you honorably quitted me, and left England, on a sudden expedition with a friend. Six months after consigned me a new companion, and with him I took a trip to Paris, where I soon beheld the beautiful and justly adored Lady Lavinia; fame soon spread the report of your mutual attachment, and fired with the frenzy of jealousy, (whose spark was again soon fanned to a flame) I determined to plan a scheme of engaging the celebrated

lebrated Chevalier Morency to pass a few hours with me in the absence of my enamorado, when I left no stratagem untried to spur his vindictive spirit, persuade him Lavinia secretly adored him, though her prudery avoided an explicit confession, and urged him, by every possible fallacy, to elope with her, and having learnt from the domestics you was sitting out for Versailles, I intimated an idea of his supplying your situation, and begging half an hour's chat with Lady Lavinia on the terrace, where should she repulse his addresses, a chaise and four was the next evening to carry her artfully away, thus I should have thrown myself in your way, kindly consoled your loss, and hoped once more to gain the treasured heart I so sincerely adored, for the villany of Morency, and apparent compliance of Lavinia, would, I trusted, have totally eradicated every impression her attractive charms had made, and Caroline Bertie have once more been blessed with the affectionate attention and provision of the fascinating Walsingham."

“The fatal billet of assignation I dispatched by a stranger, dressing myself in man’s apparel, previous to delivering it, to elude all possible discovery; the effects it produced are alas! but too well known, and I learnt, too late! I had injured the faithful wife, and not the mistress, as I then conceived her to be. Alas! the merited vengeance of offended heaven has poured its devoted wrath on this guilty head ever since: For three months ago I accepted the support of a very genteel, sensible, and, as I thought, honorable man, but, to my sorrow, the faro-bank soon divested him of his ample property, and one unlucky night the faithless dice immersed him in the vortex of destruction, to the amount of 3,000*l.* and unable to discharge the debt of honor, he privately and precipitately left London, and has never been heard of since, which information I received two days after by my landlord, who demanded immediate payment of me, for lodging, and several debts contracted in different places. This was a
severe

severe and unexpected stroke in the midst of apparent affluence, I had but five guineas by me, and that, alas! was but a fortnight's pay."

"Instantly I dispatched several notes to various people in high-life, who had formerly favored me with their company, but like a real child of misery, I found no friendly hand to relieve an imploring wanderer: One was absent on his travels, and his return uncertain; a second on important business at the House of Commons; a third was deeply engaged with his own affairs, and did not wish to add to the perplexities he was already emersed in; a fourth was deaf to the tale of sorrow, whose self-gratification had lost the pleasure of enjoyment; and a fifth replied, his memory did not furnish him with the recollection of the unfortunate suppliant. Many more proofs of disappointment could I enumerate, the ultimate of which was the seizure of my apparel, rapaciously torn from me, and an immediate conveyance to this school of iniquity and extortion, and here too I have

parted with every superfluous covering to obtain the coarse and scanty meal that supported my wretched existence, and I have no comfort left but the hope of a speedy end to my woes, in the gloomy cell of a cheerless prison."

"Adieu, then, Mr. Walsingham, best, yet most injured of men, 'tis impossible I can ever compensate the bitter pangs I have cost you, I shall now fly to the arms of despair, a prey to the endless remorse of an evil conscience! Can heaven inflict a severer punishment? Oh! no. Yet, I shall feel one faint sensation of consolation, by having acknowledged my perfidy, and removed the weight of my crime from the bosom of some innocent suspected."

She then rose to depart, but the Marquis detained her by inquiring the amount of her debts in general, to which she replied, "fifty guineas."

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The Marquis then drawing a bank note from his pocket book to that amount, presented it to her, "As the child of woe," said he, "I bestow my charity, but as the murderers of life, peace, and happiness, I view you with an eye of abhorrence; an injured brother cannot pardon a wretch like thee, but trusts he possesses the requisite mercy of a christian, by snatching you from that infamous mansion of diabolical vice and destruction, whither those harpies were dragging you, and if your contrition is real, and you would swear to lead a life of penitence, I will provide for you in some solitary recess where your errors may be buried in oblivion."

Miss Bertie overpowered by such unmerited generosity, fell at his feet, and bathing them with her tears, promised the strictest obedience to his commands. "I have," said she, "*one* friend still left, who resides in South Carolina, to her I will immediately write, and if her friendship still glows, and she will give me her protection, I will, with your permission,

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sion,

sion, undertake the voyage, there my character will be free from censure, and, I trust, by leaving the scene of my iniquity, I shall also leave my vices, and flying thus determined from the lures of temptation, regain once more the path of virtue, and procure by my suitable ability some domesticated and genteel department in the circle of some family, through the recommendation of my friend, where I may at least become an industrious and useful member of society, for tho' I must ever remain a fallen star, the effulgence of others may reflect, from their unfulfilled ray, a feeble lustre on my fainter gleam."

"Alas! the flowers of fancy, to my intoxicated sense, exhaled more fragrant perfume in the delusive paths of dissipation, than in the tranquil shades of virtue and wisdom, where a straggling thorn though inflicting but a trivial wound, disgusted, and determined me to turn to paths more seducing, and apparently devoid of those injurious briars, where I too eagerly pursued the magic winding, nor
paused

paused to reflect on the length of my ramble, 'till I found myself in an inextricable labyrinth, furrounded by pernicious weeds, exhaling poison and infecting the very touch: I now shrunk with dismay, and vainly endeavoured to retrace my wandering steps, but the intricacy subverted my design, no friendly clue was left to guide the wanderer back, and lost to every hope of deliverance, my only remaining consolation was to join the deluded group who soon furrounded me, and by their persuasive fallacy and advice I soon conquered my aversion to this destructive path, and dared to smile, like them, defiance at morality."

The Marquis, though repugnant to her character, listened with a degree of satisfaction to her self-crimination: "I shall remain a week longer in town," said he, "therefore provide yourself a decent habitation, 'till your friend's letter arrives, enclose it under cover to me, and I shall then judge what prospect of success you have in view, when, if your

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friend

friend is willing to receive you, I will empower my steward to conduct you safe on board the first vessel that sails, and all the recompense I ask is to receive an annual letter, informing me you merit my commiseration, by strictly adhering to your solemn promise, of reforming your late dreadful conduct." He then added a present of five guineas, and promised to furnish her equipment of necessaries during her voyage.

"Walsingham's purse can never be authorised to relieve you," continued the Marquis, "and mine only must be considered as bestowing its mite on a stranger; for, alas! though your crime be imprinted on the new fallen snow, and dissolved by the first beam of compassion, should memory too busily renew the tale to the attentive ear of justice, I fear the chill of horror soon would freeze the mass 'ere half dissolved, and the congealing traces re-appear; fly then, ill-fated female, lose not a moment to redeem the virtues

tues dread experience has taught you so earnestly to preserve."

Miss Bertie now paid her grateful acknowledgments to the Marquis, but did not dare meet the eyes of Walsingham; her release was immediately procured, and she drove off in the coach to an obscure street in search of an abode during her stay, promising to inform the Marquis of her situation, and every minute particular he had enjoined her to observe.

By this time the servant returned with the irritated creditor, who after repeating many invectives, accepted the bail, and the unhappy Stanley was released, and restored to his dejected family, 'till his affairs could be arranged, which detained the Marquis and Walsingham several days, during which time, Miss Bertie begged the honor of a call at her humble habitation, where they found her industriously employed in an ample supply of needle-work, and situated in a neat and re-

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spectable

spectable family, yet Walsingham never saw her without the most painful emotion.

“ You have performed the duties of a christian,” would he often say to the Marquis, “ but, alas ! my heart rebels too strongly at present to retaliate good for such unmerited evil, nor can I urge one excuse in her behalf, while my unconquerable aversion is continually reminding me of her cruel duplicity ; and I often wonder, noble friend, at the benign compassion you have shewn my errors also, which, thank heaven, are in some measure palliated by the discovery we have lately made, and I trust you do not conceive me the culpable wretch you was once taught to believe me.”

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

ON the following evening they returned to the Castle, where Miss Bertie's relation was explained, pitied, and condemned.

Mr. Walsingham now began to think of re-visiting India, disposing of his plantations, and returning to England, to spend the remainder of his days in happiness and tranquillity in the enjoyment of his friends, and the affluence of his ample possessions.

The dormant spark of Lord Edwin's passion for the beautiful Rosalie now revived, and, half timid, half resolved, he took the first

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opportunity

opportunity of soliciting Walsingham's consent to his intended union, and begging him to urge his influence with the Marquis.

Walsingham listened with delight, 'twas his heart's most earnest wish, and would crown the summit of his future felicity, provided his noble friend assented: He then accompanied Lord Edwin to the Marquis's chamber, and by the persuasive eloquence of love, friendship, and honor, the Marquis banished his objections, since the elucidation of the mystery, which would have been its total prevention, and through the intercession of his family bestowed his blessing and consent.

"Would she were not so near allied," did he often say, "but as the finger of impropriety cannot fully the lustre of this brilliant, it may as well grace my Edwin's coronet as beam its enviable refulgence on a less worthy possessor; in her I consign a treasure to your protection, and be it your care to preserve and improve its inestimable value."

Lady

Lady Mentoria expressed a fervent wish that the nuptials of her nieces might be celebrated at the Castle, on the same day with Lord Edwin and Rosalie, as it was her desire to attend the bridal trio to the altar, previous to Mr. Walsingham re-visiting India, as fate might create a thousand intervening preventions 'ere he again reached the shores of England; and the Marquis ever ready to please and oblige his venerable aunt, agreed to her proposal, and every preparation was immediately ordered for the splendid celebration.

The environs of the Castle rung with the joyful news, while the brains of half the vicinity was turned with wonder and delight, and Lady Mentoria, as directress, inspected every decoration and arrangement on the occasion. Lord and Lady Lansdowne arrived three days previous to the celebration, and the Count and Countess of Valletort, relatives of Lord Carlton, accompanied by the Ladies Julia and Clara Fitzroy, sisters to the Countess,

efs, who were deputed bride-maids to the Ladies Adela and Louisa, while Lady Selina Courtney officiated in the same character for Rosalie, and was acknowledged the most graceful and elegant figure of the festive group.

Innumerable were the boxes of paraphernalia arriving at the Castle daily, for the decoration of the bridal train, while the gentlemen amused themselves in commenting on the current report of Miss Villars's elopement to Scotland, with the little fribble Col. Ardvine, whose profligacy and gaming it was surmised would soon reduce him to the lowest ebb of misery and destruction, as his notorious character was too well known, and circulated with additional aggravated vices, amongst every class of public libertinism.

Alas! deluded and incorrigible Georgina, what desperate trials await thy boasted stoicism; may'st thou be enabled to support them with a suitable degree of firmness, nor the
pointed

pointed finger of scorn thou hast levelled at others retaliate its dire direction towards thee, may thy example preserve others from the same obstinate course, and thy misfortunes be softened by the lenient hand of mercy. Such was the effusion of compassion from the fair inmates of the Castle, whose bosoms deplored the errors and misfortunes of the misguided Georgina.

Every domestic was risen on the nuptial morn by five o'clock : Le Brun was flying with his usual agility up four stairs on a stretch with the Marquis's cut-velvet suit, while Carlos was displaying to Agnes Lord Edwin's diamond buckles, and Gertrude inquiring if she could offer her assistance amongst the ladies, as Andrew was viewing his new suit, and delighting himself with the thoughts of the ingenious disposal he meant to make of some choice exotics and roses, by the secret permission of Lady Mentoria.

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"I know who'll look handsomest," said he, as Wilson passed through the gallery with Lady Louisa's robe.

"Why, my Lady to be sure," answered the pert attendant, perfectly understanding his partial idea, and flapping the door, hurried away.

By eleven the elegant group had assembled in the drawing-room, the blushing brides wore each a dress exactly similar, a plain muslin robe loosely fastened over white farset, and long veils negligently thrown over their beautiful ringlets, unsoiled by powder, quite in morning dishabille by the Marquis's desire, who arranged the procession to the chapel in the following order: Lord Edwin and Rosalie led the way, Lord Carlton and Lady Adela followed, and Sir Henry and Lady Louisa preceded the three bride-maids, and their respective beaux, while the Marquis and Lady Mentoria, with the Count and Countess brought up the rear, and the attendants closed the procession:

cession: The avenues of the park were lined with villagers, and the chapel doors were thrown open to admit a view of the ceremony; on the altar was spread a covering of white sattin, edged with silver fringe, while three chalices of gold contained the most beautiful exotics, and from the center one blazed aromatic incense, and a wreath and branches of roses intermixed with myrtle, richly waved in impending festoons round the table, and formed a most beautiful appearance, while it delighted the spectator, for Andrew alone had invented and arranged the charming decoration, to please and surprise the party; three stools, covered with the same fringed sattin supported the adorative knee of each blooming bride; and returning to the Castle, Andrew had again evinced his ingenuity by strewing the avenue with blossoms.

This mark of attention pleased the Marquis, "Thou shalt not go unrewarded, Andrew,"

drew," said he, as the grateful old man gently wiped a tear of heart-felt satisfaction on his clean spotted silk handkerchief, drawn from its long-hoarded recess on the present joyful occasion.

The brides soon after retired to dress for dinner. Rosalie's robe was of white crape, spangled with silver, and the train looped with pearls, and encircled by wreaths of yellow roses crossing the petticoat, fastened by silver cordage and tassels of bullion. Lady Adela's dress differed only in the flowers; wreaths of convolvulus festooned her petticoat, and a drapery sash of violet satin crossed the train, depending from the shoulder and fastened in negligent elegance on the left side: While Lady Louisa's fancy selected the pomegranate blossom to adorn an exact similar robe, and turbans of the same texture, with elegant plumes of ostrich and paradise feathers, ornamented and constituted their head dresses.

Lady

Lady Mentoria, before the charming brides left their dressing-room exhibited her generosity, by presenting a case of jewels, from which she distributed elegant memorials of her affection; to Lady Adela she assigned a superb diamond crescent for her turband; to Lady Louisa a diamond plume; and to her charming Rosalie a brilliant bandeau of exquisite beauty for her hair, while the generosity of her father had also exemplified itself in the choice of an elegant pair of ear-rings and necklace, of beautiful pearls, with an enamelled watch set with the same, and Lord Edwin fastened his own incomparable miniature, set with brilliants, round the bosom of his lovely bride, when she descended in full blaze of beauty to the drawing-room.

The bridegrooms were elegantly dressed in embroidered suits, but Lord Edwin's expressive and charming countenance added to his graceful form, rendered him the most captivating object of admiration, nor had honest Andrew erroneously adjudged the prize of beauty

beauty to Rosalie, who, indeed, far eclipsed the rival sisters, and was uncommonly cheerful and enchanting the whole day, which was passed in the highest festivity, and a sumptuous entertainment given to a numerous and brilliant company, nor were the villagers exempt from sharing the general bounty, as an ample and excellent dinner was provided them on the back lawn.

Lady Mentoria's pensioners too, though sixty miles distant, had not been forgotten, and the same festivity reigned in their tranquil village on the occasion, while their evening concluded with dancing, bonfires, and a rustic epithalamium, composed by Evelyn, and chanted by every villager, while those who could not sing, readily and earnestly repeated it.

A private ball in the evening at the Castle which broke up at twelve, completed the entertainment, when the Count and Countess of Valletort, with Lord and Lady Carlton, and

and the Ladies Fitzroy, retired to Carlton Villa, about five miles distant: Sir Henry and Lady Lansdowne to their seat also, in the same vicinity, accompanied by two of Sir Henry's intimate friends: and Lord Edwin and Lady St. Laurens, with their elegant bride-maid, Lady Selina Courtney, remained at the Castle, where they continued about three weeks, when they set off for their town residence in Grosvenor-Square, and the delighted parent undertook his voyage to India, about a month afterwards.

Miss Bertie fulfilled her promise of enclosing her friend's letter to the Marquis the moment it arrived, and Montague in return was dispatched to London, with orders to supply her equipment, and see her safe on board, under the Captain's protection, and the Marquis found his heart revive with an unusual glow of satisfaction, as Montague related his last view of her, waving her handkerchief from the vessel, and repeating a thousand grateful

grateful blessings and prayers for the peace and happiness of the Marquis.

“You have surely, my Lord,” added Montague, “saved the poor drooping creature from the brink of destruction.”

“Thy beneficent heart at least is willing to hope so,” replied the Marquis, “What good may result from my plan heaven knows, but I trust I have removed her from iniquity, and prevented her ever doing more mischief in England, however her propensities may be renewed in a foreign clime.”

Lord and Lady St. Lauren copying each other's virtues were the complete patterns of connubial love, respected and revered by every class of society.

An uninterrupted bliss gilded the passing day, when a letter from the faithful Madelon tended to prove the spark of grateful affection had not been extinguished on the altar of mun-

ficence, and that memory would still proportion the reward of merit: The letter was, as usual, fraught with every sentiment of affection and respect, and communicated the news of Madelon and Lindor's intended nuptials, in a few weeks, from the time it left Chamouny; it also expressed, Giralaine grew infirm, and Reuben was subject to a fixed rheumatic, so that Josephine now despaired of ever visiting England, as attendant to her valued friend, for the marriage of Madelon would totally confine her as nurse and manager of the cottage, and it would remain for her alone to smooth the pillow of infirmity, and support the crutch of decrepitude. Lindor too subjoined respectful remembrance, and hinted his approaching happiness.

Lady St. Laurens read the letter with delight, and instantly penned one in return, expressing her pleasure at the news of Madelon's happiness, and desiring her to fix on the most pleasant and commodious vacant cottage, which she requested might be furnished with
every

every requisite convenience, to defray which expence she inclosed a bank note, and a handsome present for Josephine, whom she enjoined to be virtuous and dutiful, and added, she should ever consider Reuben and Giralbine her pensioners, for whose support she should faithfully transmit twenty pounds per annum, as a memorial of gratitude for past kindness to herself and Lord Edwin.

The delight this letter gave the faithful cottagers is better felt than described, and the Vale of Chamouny rung with the echoed praises of Lady St. Lauren's generosity.

Carlos earnestly soliciting Marcella might preserve a station in the family, received Lord Edwin's consent to send for her, and thus render every party with whom he was formerly interested, if possible, as happy as himself, and as he had witnessed the virtuous affection of Marcella, he did not hesitate to comply with Carlos's request.

Mr.

Mr. Walsingham, after a prosperous and pleasant voyage, settled his affairs, and returning to England, presented his beloved daughter with a considerable fortune, and became alternately an inmate of the Castle and Grosvenor-Square, where he would often remark, with adoration to the Supreme Being, that the sunshine of happiness gilded the close of life's evening, though the tempest of misfortune had obscured the brightest tints of morning, that promised so fair and unclouded a day; and he trusted the winter of life would be cherished by the consolatory hope of an eternal spring, visiting his mouldering urn, and renovating those blossoms of virtue in their glorious transplantation, that too warm a sun had withered in their former bloom, and left them drooping and forlorn to the direction of the impetuous tempest, whose ruder blast had torn and devastated every trembling leaf.

Murmur not, thou victim of misfortune,
for the hand that levels the shaft of poignant

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I

agony

agony can administer the antidotal balm, to extract the venom, as his benignant mercy shall direct, and inculcate, by indubitable proofs, that the mortal, however severely afflicted, should never distrust Providence.

FINIS.



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